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**“It’s no goin’ tae be a day in the
park”: Separate provision for
pupils with social, emotional
and behavioural difficulties in
Scotland**

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Abstract

This research maps out separate provision for pupils with SEBD in Scotland and investigates the experience of pupils in such provision. The mapping study used a postal questionnaire which provided, for the first time, a picture of the sector in terms of who is running it, their sense of purpose, the curriculum on offer, the background of pupils, links with mainstream schools, and attitudes towards evaluating effectiveness. Some findings were predictable, such as the social background and gender mix of pupils, but others were more surprising, such as the high level of exclusion and low number of schools which viewed reintegration as a key purpose.

To investigate pupil experience of separate provision interviews were carried out with a total of fourteen pupils from two different schools. These interviews addressed specific questions relating to curriculum, educational experience, ethos and stigmatisation. In this thesis Symbolic Interactionism is used as a theoretical lens through which to examine pupil experience. It became clear that whether a pupil experiences re-signification or stigmatisation is not a straightforward matter, but depends on staff attitudes and peer relationships. The ethos of schools emerged as of fundamental importance, and as something which appears to exist independently of the type of curriculum on offer. Perhaps most significantly the importance of the curriculum and of receiving a 'mainstream' education, to even the most disaffected pupils, emerged.

The findings from both the questionnaire and pupil interviews are discussed in terms of the emerging themes of 'separateness', 'vulnerability' and 'diversity'. In particular the difficulties encountered by an 'exclusionary' service in an age of inclusion are examined. It is argued that the current system leads to stigmatisation of the sector and the people who work in it. In addition, the impact of the persisting tension between welfare and punishment approaches to pupils with SEBD is noted throughout the thesis. This research provides new knowledge about this sector. This is the first time that information concerning schools for pupils with SEBD in Scotland has been gathered together to provide an overall picture of the service on offer. The interviews also provide new knowledge about the experiences of pupils in these schools.

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Introduction

This thesis concerns the separate provision in Scotland for pupils who are said to have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD), that this is a problematic label is acknowledged and discussed in chapter 1. Two fundamental questions are addressed through two separate, but related studies. The first is, 'What is the nature of available provision in Scotland?' and the second is 'What is it like to be a pupil in one of these schools?'. This chapter will offer an explanation of the motivating factors, both personal and academic, which prompted the research; an outline of the organisation of the thesis; and finally an account of some of the key challenges facing policy-makers which can be identified through this research.

1. Origins

Although no one has ever been imprudent enough to ask 'Why SEBD?' when I describe to them the area of my research, the unspoken question is a valid one, and one which can't be answered solely through a discussion of the questions which arise out of an academic examination of current understanding on the topic. An important factor in why this research was conducted lies in my professional experience in this sector.

Before embarking on the path of research student I worked for 10 years with pupils described as having SEBD, first as a residential care worker and latterly as a teacher. My first post was as a child care assistant (officially, but all staff were simply 'adults') in a residential therapeutic community for girls aged 8-18 which adhered as much as possible to the guiding principles of this approach; my last was as a senior teacher in a residential primary school which also described itself as a therapeutic community, but bore no resemblance to the first. The journey between the two took in secondary schools, secure units, day schools, local authority, private and voluntary

schools, co-educational and boys only schools, schools which espoused behaviourist approaches and schools which championed none.

This career path is unusual in terms of the range of institutions in which I worked, and sometimes lived. My experience is that staff tend not to move around between schools, most only working in one or two special schools in their career. The range of institutions is, I believe, important because it led me to adopt a more questioning approach. Special schools for pupils with SEBD can have something of the ‘total institution’ (Goffman 1968) about them. No matter how strange the routines and relationships may appear to an outsider, the insider soon becomes acclimatised and ceases to question. This can lead to a belief in the inevitability of a particular way of working. Having been an established member of four such institutions, and a more temporary visitor to two others, I quickly learned that such inevitability is an illusion, and that there are indeed many different ways to skin the proverbial cat.

Despite the range of schools and units and different roles in which I worked there were some constants, and these are at least as important as the differences. The first is the sense of isolation and distance from the outside world. The level of ignorance about these schools from other educational professionals working in the mainstream can be startling. For example, when employed as a project worker (teacher) in a SEBD primary school I took part in a number of in-service training courses run by the local authority, alongside teachers from mainstream schools. Over the course of two years none of the teachers I met were aware of the existence of the school I worked at, despite some of them teaching in schools which had pupils currently placed with us. This sense of isolation was articulated recently by those attending a one-day seminar held recently in Edinburgh¹, and is also evident in this research.

A second constant, despite sometimes fundamental differences in approach, has been the presence in every school of at least some examples of excellent practice, by

¹ ‘The future of separate provision for SEBD in a policy climate of inclusion’ held at Moray House, University of Edinburgh on April 29th 2005.

which I mean work with a young person which can clearly be seen to have had a significant, lasting and positive impact. Examples of which would include a young person reforming fractured family relationships, the cessation of self-harming or substance misuse, clear gains in educational attainment, or the re-integration to mainstream of 'hopeless cases'. That is not to say that the majority of practice in each school was excellent, or even good, but that even in schools or units in which there were substantial difficulties there were pockets of very positive work.

These schools carry negative perceptions not only because they run counter to the dominant belief in inclusion, but they also seem prone to more than their fair share of scandal and media attention. As a practitioner in separate provision I was often asked whether it was a 'good thing'. The distrust in which the sector appears to be held, by those who are aware of its existence, sits uneasily with my own experience of seeing exceptionally good work, and pupils' lives being changed for the better because of their placement. However, I had also experienced some schools or units as being extremely unhappy places for staff, and at the time I assumed also for the pupils. In addition it seemed to me that the schools I worked in were so dissimilar in many ways that it wasn't possible to talk about them in general terms. Reflection on the sector seemed to generate more questions. How could fundamentally different institutions and approaches have similarly good results? Was it possible to talk about the 'sector' in a meaningful way? What made these schools such unhappy places for some and yet such a positive experience for others? Why were separate schools being largely ignored by the mainstream education system? Could key elements of good practice be identified? What did the future hold for these schools? And, finally, is separate provision for pupils with SEBD a 'good thing'?

These were the questions which I brought to this research, some were answered, at least in part, through the preliminary reading I undertook. Some findings from research were dispiriting, such as Topping's (1983) discovery of 66% 'spontaneous remission' as an explanation for different regimes having similar success rates. It seemed that perhaps the little 'victories' which had seen me through the previous ten years would have happened anyway without my intervention. Other reading was

more pleasurable, particularly studies of schools, which had a comfortingly familiar feel to them; some strange looks were passed my way in libraries as I sat nodding in animated agreement. I discovered that many of the heated debates which had dominated staff team meetings existed in parallel in the literature. Should James be allowed out to do river rope-walking with his keyworker when his class are doing their 5-14 maths? (alternative versus mainstream curriculum). Should Michael be challenged on his swearing on mornings after home visits? ('rubber boundaries', Cole, Visser and Upton 1998). What do we do with Simon when he bites and spits – exclude him or give him space to talk? (welfare versus punishment). Is it better to re-integrate David to his old primary school, or does he need a fresh start somewhere he's not known? (stigmatisation). When Jamie says "It's your fault I hit him, you didna gie me ma tablet on time" should we be concerned? (medicalisation and abrogation of individual responsibility).

As a result of the process of reviewing the literature some of the original questions with which I approached the research remained, and new ones were identified. The most significant of these was the need to establish a 'map' of separate provision in Scotland as existing knowledge on what was on offer was limited to the special school census returns, which were not broken down into schools meeting the needs of different 'categories of impairment'. Such a map had been generated for England and Wales, largely through the use of postal surveys (Wilson and Evans 1980, Cole *et al.* 1998), but Scotland had not been included in these studies. Other issues which emerged – educational experience, curriculum, ethos and stigmatisation – appeared to need a different approach, with gaining the perspective of pupils important, and thus the two study research design was settled on.

This thesis is written at a time when inclusion continues to be the dominant rhetoric in relation to pupils with special educational needs, despite a recent apparent change of heart by Baroness Warnock. On introducing myself and my research to others I have often had the response 'Special schools? Aren't they all closed?'. The continuation of such schools against the prevailing ideology is an important part of the context of this research. At a time when pupils with most categories of additional

support needs (ASN) are indeed educated in mainstream provision, the numbers of young people in schools for pupils with SEBD have not fallen (Gibson 2005). This often comes as a surprise to those at the 'chalk face'; in encounters with both students and experienced teachers the belief is frequently expressed that 'disruptive' pupils are no longer removed from mainstream schools, but remain there to the detriment of peers and teachers alike.

2. Organisation of the thesis

As will become clear on reading through the following chapters, an awareness of the context, in terms of history, policy and the Scottish milieu, is crucial to developing an understanding of the current state of separate provision. An introduction to the key issues is provided in chapter 1, in which the notion of the 'shaping myth' of Scottish education is examined. This is followed in chapter 2 by a review of the literature, through which the specific research questions relating to educational experience, curriculum, ethos and stigma were identified. In particular, the suggestion is raised that the ethos of a school, and the stigmatisation of pupils in it may both be related to the curriculum on offer - whether 'mainstream' or 'alternative'. The final theoretical chapter, chapter 3, serves two purposes. First it provides a statement about where I stand on the fundamental questions of the relationship between structure and agency, concluding that the approach of critical realism has much to offer. Secondly it discusses some of the approaches to theorising special education which have been suggested, and argues the case for the adoption of symbolic interactionism as the principle 'theoretical lens' in this research.

The next two chapters report on the first study, a postal questionnaire to separate provision in Scotland which eventually secured an 85% response rate. Chapter 4 provides a discussion of the method and a presentation of the results under the headings 'the schools', 'the pupils', 'curriculum', 'what do the schools provide', 'links with mainstream and re-integration' and 'measuring effectiveness', while

chapter 5 offers an analysis of the data. The impact of the current policy climate on the schools responding to the questionnaire is emphasised in this section.

Chapters 6,7 and 8 report the second study: interviews with pupils in two schools which were alike apart from in the curriculum (alternative or mainstream) which they offer. In the first of these chapters the use of the term 'case study' is considered as is its applicability to this part of the research. Issues relating to interviewing young people are discussed and the processes of data collection and analysis are described. Chapter 7 presents the data from fourteen pupil interviews, seven from each school, along with some observations made of the schools and pupils. Finally, in chapter 8 the interview data is analysed. Differences between the two schools are identified and possible explanations for them are discussed. In this chapter it is argued that rather than the type of curriculum on offer affecting the school ethos and stigmatisation of pupils, the relationship between the three is more complex with school ethos appearing to be the dominant factor. It is further suggested that school ethos is influenced by wider pressures such as the policy climate.

The concluding chapter of this thesis draws together the analyses from the questionnaire and interviews. Three key themes are identified which not only encapsulate the current status of the sector, but also relate to the experience of the pupils in these schools. These themes are diversity, separateness and vulnerability. In addition to these themes which are discussed in the final chapter, this research also highlights some of the issues which present challenges to the policy-makers and these will be discussed below.

3. The way forward?

Perhaps the question 'Is separate provision a good thing?' isn't the right one to ask. There is a continued demand for places in separate provision and there is no reason to suppose that this will decline, possible explanations for this continued demand are discussed in chapter 5. Whether this is a response to the needs of the pupils referred,

of their mainstream peers and teachers, or of the education system as a whole is, in a way, unimportant. What is important is that these schools will continue to exist and that therefore every endeavour should be made to ensure that they provide a good quality educational experience.

I would argue that too much attention has been paid to the question of whether it is right that these schools exist and not enough to what is actually happening in them. These schools are the 'poor relation' of the education system and as such they have largely been ignored and left to their own devices. A central argument of this thesis is that the current policy climate of inclusion has led to these schools being stigmatised, rendering them unable to function as part of a continuum of provision, and has caused the people who work in them to be stigmatised by association. The uncertainty over the future of separate provision has led to a vulnerability in some parts of the sector which has had consequences for the staff and pupils in some schools.

The first challenge for the future of separate provision is for policy-makers and practitioners alike to ensure that it is a part of the overall educational provision and not isolated. Given that the demand for these schools will continue for the foreseeable future it seems reasonable to ask that this is openly acknowledged by policy makers, giving the schools and staff in them an increased sense of security and allowing strategic planning to take place.

A second motif which keeps appearing in this research is that of the tension between welfare and punishment approaches to SEBD. This division is a historical one, and can be seen as related to differing constructions of childhood, and different perspectives on agency and the extent to which individuals can be held responsible for their own behaviour, both of which are discussed in chapter 3. The historical tension between these approaches is perpetuated by mixed messages sent by current policies towards young people in trouble which are discussed in chapter 1. Law and order appears to occupy a constant position, high on the political agenda, with politicians keen to demonstrate their ability to tackle offending and indiscipline.

Thus the punishment approach which construes these young people as deliberately causing trouble and holds them (and their families) solely responsible for their behaviour is emphasised. I would suggest that this way of construing these individuals, quite apart from ignoring the wider social causes of their difficulties, does little to support the development of relationships characterised by mutual respect which this research, like other studies, demonstrates is crucial to effective practice. This is not a new argument; in 1970 Greenwood-Wilson, writing about the dual role of workers in residential homes as ‘agents of punishment’ and ‘agents of therapy’, suggested that ‘this basic paradox inevitable militates against success’ (Greenwood-Wilson 1970, cited in Tutt 1974). Much more recently Parsons (2005) has examined the wider cultural pressures which lead to policy towards young people in trouble tending to adopt a punitive tone. In this thesis the impact of the continuing co-existence of these two approaches on the experiences of the pupils is highlighted.

The second challenge, then, to those involved in the future of provision for these young people is to avoid the temptation of harsh rhetoric and knee-jerk reactions to demonstrate their intolerance of indiscipline. Rather I would argue that we should be looking towards longer-term approaches which avoid a simplistic portrayal of these young people as ‘dangerous’ or ‘criminal’ but which look instead at wider causes of disruptive behaviour.

Finally, this research demonstrates the importance of not assuming these pupils are disaffected with school because either they can’t manage the work or because they don’t value education. That aspect of the interviews with pupils which made the most lasting impression on me was the almost universal commitment to education which they articulated. Work at the wrong level of challenge and subjects which were felt to be irrelevant did cause some difficulties, and the well structured ‘alternative’ courses were seen to be motivating; however, the unanimous verdict of the pupils is that it is teachers that make the difference to their educational experience. While these pupils are undoubtedly disaffected with education they locate the cause of this disaffection in the attitudes of teachers rather than any curriculum issues.

The third challenge then is to those concerned with designing and delivering initial teacher education and continuing professional development courses. The development of positive attitudes towards all pupils is clearly important, but how to achieve this in practice will require a great deal of thought. It is also important that adults in schools are encouraged to pay more than lip-service to the notion of pupil voice. In addition, it will be important to ensure that curriculum flexibility is not allowed to be used as an excuse for delivering a second-rate educational experience to these pupils who themselves are demanding challenging and certificated courses.

Conclusion

This thesis provides, for the first time, a 'map' of available separate provision for pupils with SEBD in Scotland. It also gives an insight into what it is like to be a pupil in one of these schools. That school ethos appears to be the crucial factor in determining pupil experience might be predicted from other studies. This research is significant in that it explores how the wider political climate, schools ethos and pupil experience are connected.

This research has an important contribution to make to our understanding of separate provision in Scotland. As there was no existing map of provision it was important that time was taken to establish what was 'out there' to provide a context for the research in individual schools in which hearing the pupil voice was a priority. As a result along the way some issues arose which could not be explored in great depth. The different experiences of young women who are said to have SEBD is a largely under-researched area, although this gap has recently been well addressed with the publication of *Problem Girls* (Lloyd 2005). The phenomenon of increasing medicalisation of pupils in trouble at school also requires more examination, particularly I would suggest in relation to the different motivations of parents/carers and professionals. There is much comment in this thesis about the morale of teachers. However this is largely inferred from observations and informal

conversations. Clearly it is important that further direct research with teachers is undertaken.

Finally, a note on the language used in this thesis. As is discussed in chapter 1, the phrase 'pupils with SEBD' is used to indicate those pupils who have been formally identified as having SEBD and does not imply any judgement about the validity of that identification process. In other chapters the word 'normal' is used, usually to describe schools or pupil behaviour. This is not unproblematic, implying as it does a value judgement of those which do not come under the 'normal' heading. However the decision was made to use this description as it is the language which the pupils themselves use. It is important to recognise that these young people do have a strong sense of what is 'normal' and that some choose to apply it to themselves and others do not. My use of it should not be taken as suggesting that I think there is an objective measure of 'normality', rather I consider that it is a subjective judgement which people do make and which therefore cannot be ignored.

Chapter 1

Introduction

In the first section of this chapter the use and usefulness of the label ‘social, emotional and behavioural difficulties’ will be discussed. In the second section the Scottish context will be considered. This discussion will utilise the notion of a ‘shaping myth’ (Raffe 2003) to explore the Scottish context. The extent to which the Scottish education system is distinctive has been disputed (Raffe 2003), however the longevity of the myth is not in question. In the third section the impact of the ‘shaping values, myths and traditions’ on influences on policy and provision for pupils with SEN and SEBD in particular will be discussed. This history lends itself to division into periods, in which the boundaries are marked either by milestone reports, *Kilbrandon* (SED 1964a) and *Warnock* (DES 1978), or by major political change. The 1980s and early 90s witnessed unprecedented ‘integration’ of pupils now designated as having Special Educational Needs, with the dominant model changing to ‘inclusion’ by the end of the 20th century. However, within this general trend towards increasing inclusion pupils who attract the label SEBD have been a special case. Reasons for this different treatment will be discussed in section four. A summary of key legislation relating to young people with SEBD is provided in Appendix A.

1. Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

The literature on SEBD often focuses on causes; explanations can be seen as falling into three categories which are not mutually exclusive. Firstly there is what has been termed the ‘medical’ or ‘individual deficit model’; secondly there are explanations which look outside the individual to environmental factors or stresses, such as school context and family circumstances. Finally some explanations are at the systems level

and use social theory to examine the benefit to society of having some members labelled deviant. In these explanations SEBD can be viewed as a socially constructed label which fulfils a social function. The particular function being served, and which behaviours or groups of pupils attract the label will vary according to which social theory is favoured. These theoretical perspectives on SEBD will be explored in chapter 3.

The term 'social, emotional and behavioural difficulties' (and its English counterpart EBD) is a relatively recent one, only coming into widespread use in the 1980s. The kinds of behaviours and pupils which today attract the SEBD label would previously (since 1945 in official documents) have been described as 'maladjusted'. Before 1945 these children would have officially been labelled 'mentally defective' or as suffering from 'nervous instability', (Galloway, Armstrong and Tomlinson 1994:112).

The use of the term SEBD is fraught with difficulties: it is a subjective term; it has been considered too vague to have any real meaning; and it overlaps with other labels. There is broad agreement in the literature that the definition of SEBD is problematic (e.g. Topping 1983; Lloyd-Smith and Dwyfor Davies 1995; Munn and Lloyd 1998). The process of identifying a pupil as 'having' SEBD is largely subjective (McPhee 1992, Farrell 1995), or as Davies comments: 'One man's disruption may approximate to another's peak teaching experience' (1976: 27). Whilst the identification of behaviours - or pupils - as disruptive, problematic, troubling or troublesome may indeed be lacking in objectivity, it seems fair to say that some behaviours are more likely to be identified in this way than others. In other words, the process may be subjective, but it is not entirely random.

Perhaps a fairer criticism is one that was applied to the previous designation 'maladjustment', that it is a 'catch-all' (Laslett 1977). The wide embrace of SEBD can be seen in Cooper's description as 'characterised by their effect of being socially disruptive or disruptive to the development course of the individual' (2001: 18). The Department for Education offered a definition of EBD in Circular 9/94, which

describes children whose problems are on a continuum between 'greater than sporadic naughtiness' and 'mental illness' (DfE 1994: 4). Given the range of behaviours which lie on that continuum, added to the stated mix of causal factors from both within the child and external to the child (DfE 1994), it is clear that the label has little predictive value. The statement that a particular child 'has' SEBD does not give any clear indication of how the child might behave or what the reasons for the behaviour might be. O'Brien (2005) argues that both EBD and SEBD are 'generalised umbrella terms' which tend to take the focus away from the individual and what their particular experience may be. However, Visser (2004) has suggested that the label does give some information. It tells that the child has given adults cause for concern, probably more than one adult and probably over a sustained period of time. Other characteristics can be inferred: for example, it is likely that the child has difficulty in forming and sustaining relationships, and that they have a limited repertoire of responses to the range of social situations.

The lack of conceptual clarity of SEBD is not helped by the plethora of related terms and more recently the increasing numbers of related medical syndromes or conditions being identified (Lloyd 2003). Labels such as 'disaffected', 'disengaged', 'disruptive', 'delinquent', 'challenging', 'troubled and troubling', and conditions including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, and Conduct Disorder all have a degree of overlap with SEBD. The relationship between SEBD and mental health is a particularly complex one; as noted above the DfE Circular of 1994 described EBD as problems not so great as to be classed as mental illness. However, as Cole, Sellman, Daniels and Visser observe, 'children said to have EBD will often have significant mental health difficulties...' (2002: 9). In practice, it would appear that professionals do make a distinction between children whose difficulties take the form of acute psychiatric disorders such as schizophrenia and bi-polar disorder, and those whose problems are perhaps more chronic but less severe (Cole *et al.* 1998). It is important to note that although many of the above terms are sometimes used interchangeably they are not entirely congruent. For example, many children said to have SEBD are not disruptive, and many disruptive pupils do not attract the label SEBD.

There is little information available on the actual incidence of SEBD. The school census in Scotland collects data on the numbers of pupils with a Record of Needs (RON) and/or Individual Education Plans (IEP), and asks for the main area of difficulty. In September 2002 a total of 3221 pupils are identified as having SEBD (2472 of them in mainstream schools), representing around 0.45% of the total population of 738, 597 pupils in publicly funded primary, secondary or special schools. The total number of pupils with a RON and/or IEP was 28,463; SEBD was the main area of difficulty for around 11.3% of these pupils (Scottish Executive 2003). However, these figures must be viewed in light of the findings of Riddell, Thomson and Dyer who found some local authorities were reluctant to open Records for pupils with SEBD:

Education professionals explained that the problems of these children were often connected with disturbances in family relationships which might well be transitory. Further, they felt that recording children with social/emotional/behavioural problems was unlikely to be helpful in the long-term objective of securing resources.

Riddell, Thomson and Dyer 1992: 57

The tendency to under-record SEBD may persist and thus the actual prevalence may be higher than the 0.45% of the population noted above, although the inclusion of pupils with an IEP in the 2002 census may have redressed the balance somewhat. Dockrell, Peacey and Lunt (2002) suggest there is a probability of under-recording of EBD in England and Wales, but at the same time note an upward trend in the numbers of pupils being identified. Statistics for England and Wales are not informative in this respect; Cole, Daniels and Visser (2003) note the problems associated with gathering data on numbers of pupils with EBD, not the least of which was the government's decision in 1983 to only publish data on numbers of special schools and pupils in those schools. However, having trawled through a mass of government statistics, Cole *et al.* (2003) conclude that the number of children with behavioural difficulties who may be more appropriately placed in an alternative setting is probably 'no more than 0.5% of the compulsory school-age population'

(2003: 202). If this is the figure for pupils benefiting from alternative provision it can be assumed that the total incidence of EBD (i.e. including pupils who are appropriately placed in mainstream schools) will be significantly higher. Interestingly, given current assertions that pupils' behaviour is becoming more challenging, research conducted in the late 1960s identified 14% of pupils as maladjusted (Davie, Butler and Goldstein 1972), and between 12% and 25% as showing significant signs of psychiatric disorder, depending on where they lived (Rutter and Graham 1968).

Having discussed some of the complexities around the SEBD label it should be made clear that this thesis does not claim to attempt to resolve these issues. It will not be a purpose of this thesis to define SEBD, nor to attempt to identify the causes of SEBD. This study is concerned rather with the experience of pupils who have acquired the label. Therefore for the purpose of this study I will adapt the suggestion from Galloway and Goodwin (1987) and use 'pupils with SEBD' to refer simply to those pupils who have attracted that label. This is not an attempt to opt out of the debate but rather indicates that although the children in whom I am interested are an extremely diverse group, all share the experience of having been labelled as SEBD. This approach follows that adopted by Goffman (1968) who, referring to people who became mental-hospital patients, argued that although they were a diverse group, 'once started on the way [i.e. hospitalised], they are confronted by some importantly similar circumstances and respond to these in some importantly similar ways' (1968: 120).

2. The Scottish Context

In terms of education, Scotland has always been legislatively and administratively separate from England and Wales. While much of the legislation is similar there are key differences, for example the National Curriculum does not apply in Scotland (there are non-statutory National Guidelines instead), and the examination systems are entirely separate. There are no 'Key Stages' in Scotland, no middle schools, and

no sixth form colleges. Until 1999 the Scottish Education Department (later Scottish Office Education Department and Scottish Office Education and Industry Department) was the legislating authority, since devolution in 1999 school education in Scotland has been the responsibility of the Scottish Executive Education Department. Education in Scotland holds a significance for many people as symbol of national identity because the right to a separate education system was reserved by the 1707 Acts of Union (Anderson 1999).

There are a number of different perspectives from which to assess the distinctiveness of Scottish education, explored by Raffe (2003); depending on which perspective is taken the degree of distinctiveness will vary. Raffe (2003) concludes that it is the 'shaping myths, values and traditions' which demonstrate the most distinctiveness, compared with, e.g. policy discourse and administrative systems. It is certainly this perspective on Scottish education which has consistently engaged academic attention over time. It will be argued that the myth continues to exert some influence on the way in which pupils with SEBD are conceptualised and catered for today, and that newer discourses, particularly that of social inclusion, are also influential. The consequences of these influences can be seen in the persisting tension between welfare and punishment approaches to SEBD, between vocational and academic curricula, and between collective and individual rights.

The link between Scottish national identity and Scottish pride in the separate education system has been the subject of much analysis (e.g., McPherson 1983, McCrone 2001, and Paterson 2003). Scotland's 'myths of identity' (Nairn 1970) take various forms, but the central tenet is that Scots are egalitarian, in particular they are more egalitarian than the English (Donaldson 1974). In its most common form this egalitarianism is expressed through the fable of the 'lad o' pairts', the idea that an able child, regardless of social background, would be able to take advantage of the best education on offer. This motif, of the able child from humble origins, is present in much of the 19th century 'Kailyard literature', but it has been traced back earlier to pre-industrial times in particular to the burgh and parish schools of the 17th and 18th centuries.

The persistence of the myth right up to the present day has been explained in different ways, depending on how the term 'myth' is understood. As Paterson (2003) notes, for some it is taken to mean something which is false, whereas others favour a more anthropological interpretation of the term in which it is both celebratory and descriptive. Smout (1986) falls into the former category with his assertion that the myth served to allow the dominant classes to believe their pretence of ruling over an egalitarian system; also confirming the meritocratic view that if an individual 'fails' in such an open system it must be by dint of individual weakness.

The more anthropological version is that taken by McCrone (2001) and McPherson who cites Durkheim as the originator of the view that myth has two functions, 'to celebrate identity and values and to describe and explain the world in which they are experienced and sought' (McPherson 1983: 218). For McCrone, although there is some support for the notion that Scotland offers greater equality of opportunity, the real 'staying power' of the myth lies in its fundamental role in the Scottish national identity: 'It is an ideological device for marking off the Scots from the English, which seems to grow in importance the more the two societies grow similar' (McCrone 2001: 103). McPherson on the other hand has focused on the part played by the carriers of the myth, those in positions of influence within the education system. He coined the phrase the 'Kirriemuir career' (McPherson 1983), to describe the background of the individuals who rose to prominence, sitting on the Scottish Advisory Council on Education between 1957 and 1961. McPherson argues that a Kirriemuir career, 'took one through schools and communities in which social intercourse and educational attainment were less deeply differentiated by social class relationships than they were in the cities' (1983: 229). Thus, the egalitarian myth can be seen as having more resonance in the personal experience of the individuals charged with influencing educational policy.

Paterson (2003) provides an examination of the development of Scottish education in the 20th century, focusing on the Scottish system's attempts to balance the needs of the individual with the needs of society, against the background of the history and

myth carried by that system. Paterson takes as his starting point the Advisory Council's report in 1947 which talked about the purpose of education as 'ordered freedom' amongst other things. The qualifying 'ordered' is, argues Paterson, typical of the Scottish view on freedom which, 'is to be attained, if at all, through institutional and academic means' (2003: 3). Educational democracy, in the Scottish context, is taken to mean access to institutions (schools, colleges or universities) which provide an academic (rather than say vocational) education. When attention turns to the issue of improving equality in education in Scotland, this is understood by the Scottish people and policy-makers alike as improving access to the existing educational institutions rather than as an opportunity to change the existing system.

Paterson is concerned to demonstrate that the developments in Scottish education over the last century can be seen as a consequence of the primary aim of increasing educational democracy, rather than a haphazard response to a range of pressures. He identifies three key changes: expansion, reduction in differentiation, and increasing response to individual needs, and shows how these can all be explained in terms of underlying ideology, 'in a society whose dominant ideology is this form of universalistic individualism, pursuing personal advancement is simply not believed to be contradictory to supporting public provision' (2003: 20).

The tension between the individual and the social runs through much of the writing on the Scottish myth and education. Paterson (2003) notes that education is at once a collective matter – all have access to it – and an individual matter – the education of the individual is all important. McPherson (1983) too reports the collectivist principle, but notes that it conflicted with the notion that a degree of struggle was character forming and that therefore individuals should not be given too much help. This celebration of the individual who succeeds in the face of adversity is an example of the slip from equality to meritocracy noted in Smout (1986) above. If the system allows even a few from more humble origins to rise to the top, then any who don't make it are the victims of personal failure rather than an unequal system.

This then is the climate in which educational policy was being made in the twentieth century: valuing institutional education, an emphasis on academic rather than vocational subjects, concern with widening access, an emphasis on the education of the individual in order that they may become a valuable member of society. Special education policy, like all educational policy, is made against this specific cultural backdrop, but it is also made in the context of a wider social agenda, features of which will be discussed in the following sections. A further significant part of the cultural context is the way in which childhood is conceptualised, the connection between this and policy towards young people in trouble will be discussed in chapter 3.

3. The Early Years, before Kilbrandon

Toman (1986), McCracken (1992) and Lloyd (2000) provide histories of provision in Scotland for children with SEBD. The origins of such provision is usually traced to 1841 and the establishment of the first Industrial school for vagrant youths and beggars in Aberdeen (Lloyd 2000). However, Dr Thomas Guthrie is credited with being the motivating force behind expansion of such provision throughout the 19th century, starting with the opening of his 'Ragged School' in Edinburgh in 1847 (SED 1952). The Reformatory aim of schools was recognised in the 1854 Youthful Offenders Act, which set up an official category of 'Reform schools' for offenders to operate alongside the Industrial schools for non-offenders. However, as Bridgeland (1971) records, in both systems the early humanitarian principles were soon replaced with discipline, perhaps as a consequence of the practical necessities of routine required in the life of large institutions. Indeed these predecessors of approved schools were, for a time, viewed as 'penal institutions' (SED 1952).

Guthrie is credited with first making the distinction between 'prevention' and 'reformation' that persisted well into the 20th century (SED 1952). But in 1932 the Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act subsumed the Reform and Industrial schools under a new category of 'Approved Schools'. These schools were

‘approved’ by the secretary of state to take children who were sentenced by the courts. Toman notes that although the intention may have been to remove the distinction between the Industrial schools -charged with care and protection, and the Reform schools, the ‘largely authoritarian regimes’ (1986: 55) persisted, as did confusion as to the true purpose of the schools: ‘were such schools about custody, punishment, reform, or about welfare, education, training?’ (Toman 1986: 55).

During the twenty years after the 1932 Act, the gradual shift in attitude towards young offenders continued. Bruce (1982) describes how by the end of the Second World War the welfare of children was an issue of public concern. The 1940’s was a time of massive social reform perhaps, as suggested by Titmuss (1970), building on the feeling of national solidarity generated by the war with Nazi Germany. Whether the expansion of welfare provision was motivated by the needs of an industrialised society (Wilensky 1975), an attempt by the ruling classes to ensure political security (Saville 1957), or the natural evolution of social rights (Marshall 1950), it resulted in welfare being at the top of the policy agenda. By the time of the report of the Advisory Council into ‘Pupils who are maladjusted as a result of a social handicap’ in 1952, the move from a crime-punishment model to a treatment-education one was underway, with the purpose of the Approved schools, clearly described as ‘re-education’ (SED 1952). Lloyd (2000) also notes that while the identified causes of poor character varied from the structural to more individual – some saw poverty as a cause whereas others identified low moral condition of parents – the solution was held to be education. This faith in education reflects the esteem in which education was held in the Scottish culture as described by Paterson (2003), and presages the faith put in education as a solution to social exclusion by New Labour in the late 1990’s.

Although the biggest cohort of pupils in the approved schools were sent there by juvenile courts as a consequence of their offending behaviour, others were sent because of persistent truancy or because they were deemed to be ‘in need of care and protection’. In 1950, out of a total of 606 pupils around 80% were offenders, 10% truants and 10% in need of care and protection (SED 1952). Interestingly, of the 71

girls in Approved schools that year 40% were offenders, 20% truants and 40% in need of care or protection (SED 1952), indicating that gender was a highly significant factor in referral to juvenile court. The Advisory Committee report states: 'At the commencement of our inquiries we tended to accept the view that children in need of care and protection should not mix in approved schools with children who had been committed for some form of misbehaviour' (SED 1952 §184, p57). They go on to say this had been a mistaken view and they were now convinced that children in need of care and protection were often more difficult to 'treat' than the delinquent, with deeper underlying problems. Therefore they saw no reason for these pupils not to continue to be sent to approved schools. However the report adds that as more residential schools and better preventative treatment became available for maladjusted pupils, there should be fewer inappropriate referrals to approved school (SED 1952, §185, p57).

There were very few residential schools for maladjusted pupils, the 1952 SED report only mentions one, Barns Hostel School. This was in the tradition of the residential therapeutic community, it was headed by David Wills who was heavily influenced by both Homer Lane and AS Neill (Bridgeland 1971). The ethos of these communities will be discussed in more detail below. The predicted increase in places in residential schools for the maladjusted appears to have been slow to materialise. The 1964 report of the working party on *Ascertainment of Maladjusted Children* records only 150 residential and 80 day places available across Scotland; this at a time when assessments by child guidance services indicated the need for 400 residential and 500 day places (SED 1964b). The situation had not improved by 1966 when a report in the *Guardian* newspaper suggested that a maladjusted child living in London would have a 17 times greater chance of a suitable education (i.e. in a special school) than such a child in Scotland (Bridgeland 1971). The reason for this disparity in provision between Scotland and England is according to Bridgeland 'partly geographical, partly cultural and partly historical' (1971: 305).

In terms of geography, Bridgeland(1971) argues that rural areas have more difficulty organising and funding specialist resources, tending to rely more on clinics staffed

by itinerant professionals. The absence of specialist provision in these areas was also noted by HMI (1990), who observe that in rural areas the focus traditionally had been on prevention and the role of the mainstream school in this regard.

Historically, the origins of many of the Approved schools in the older Reform and Industrial schools with their punitive ethos may have made it difficult for an alternative approach to gain support. Paterson (2003) uses Steedmans' concept of 'defining institutions' to show how a society's institutions embody cultural values; institutions function as 'repositories of ideologies'; similarly, Garland (1990) notes that institutions create a sense of their own inevitability. As has been discussed, the values embodied by the earlier schools were more punitive than welfare oriented. Indeed, Bridgeland observes that 'pioneers such as Wills, Aitkenhead, Neill, R. F. Mackenzie 'have discovered that "therapeutic education" is not a concept readily accepted north of the border' (Bridgeland 1971: 306).

Turning to cultural explanations, The 1964 Ascertainment report lists 'Descriptive characteristics of the developing personalities of children which in the Scottish Cultural environment are frequently associated with maladaptive behaviour' (SED 1964b: Appendix B II, p49). The implication clearly being that such characteristics might not be considered maladaptive in a different cultural environment. The discussion above of the values underpinning Scottish education demonstrated the high regard in which formal academic education is held. Pupils in Scotland who appear not to make the most of the education on offer to them – for whatever reason - may be perceived as challenging a fundamental social value, and thus in some way 'deviant'; in a different cultural context they may be seen as simply not interested in schooling. In addition, the meritocratic view of education outlined above holds that individual failure is the responsibility of the individual. Within such a system if a pupil appears disengaged or to be having difficulties of some kind it is less likely that attention will focus on the system as a possible cause. Finally, Bridgeland cites the 'puritanical attitude to discipline' (1971: 306) as another feature of Scottish education. He suggests that as a consequence of this attitude maladjusted children

are seen as ‘wilfully naughty’ – in need of punishment not treatment – hence the high levels of juvenile delinquency and low levels of maladjustment.

In relation to pupils who would now be categorised as having SEBD, the cultural and historical context of Scottish education can be seen firstly as contributing to their difficulties, and secondly as making it likely that they would be viewed as deviant. As has been noted above the institutions were authoritarian regimes, with even a residential clinic, firmly in the treatment model, advocating the central importance of discipline, firm rules and punishment (Bridgeland 1971). However, at the same time there is evidence as early as the 1908 Children Act of a concern for the welfare of juveniles brought before the court (Bruce 1982). As McCracken (1992: 110) has observed ‘welfare or justice care or control, sinner or sinned against, treatment or punishment, integration or segregation’ are the perennial dilemmas in residential provision. These dilemmas, along with heightened media interest, increasing offending rates and inefficiencies and inconsistencies in the current system (Bruce 1982) all contributed to the appointment in 1961 of a Committee with the remit of considering ‘the provisions of the law of Scotland relating to the treatment of juvenile delinquents and juveniles in need of care or protection or beyond parental control’ (SED 1964a).

4. *Kilbrandon*

The *Kilbrandon Report* (SED 1964a) has been described as a radical document which resulted in a ‘major swing towards welfare principles’ (Bruce 1982: 6). Chakrabarti (1999) talks of the ‘sweeping changes’ recommended by the report, based on the belief that the crime-punishment approach to juveniles was stopping the more important work of prevention taking place, and undermining the principle of the best interests of the child as the primary concern. Kilbrandon is also credited with rejecting the distinction between delinquent and maladjusted (Bridgeland 1971). While the Kilbrandon report was clearly ground-breaking in relation to its proposal on the establishment of the Children’s Hearing system, which influenced the

subsequent Social Work (Scotland) Act (1968), it can be argued that, far from a radical change in approach, it represents the natural progression of thinking in relation to young people described as delinquent and/or maladjusted.

First, in relation to the distinction between ‘maladjusted’, ‘delinquent’ and ‘in need of care and protection’, the question of what was meant by ‘maladjustment’ and how this related to children and young people brought before the juvenile courts was addressed by the Advisory Council report (SED 1952), over 10 years earlier. The Council appears to have wrestled with the terminology, taking great care to emphasise both the social causes and cultural specificity of maladjustment (§8, §39 SED 1952). Towards the beginning of the report comes the assertion that, ‘Children manifest maladjustment in many ways. Delinquency in all its forms may be a symptom, but not all instances of delinquency find their source in maladjustment’ (SED 1952 §37 p14), however in §183 it is argued that all young people in Approved Schools are maladjusted in some way. ‘Maladjusted’ is therefore being used in a very broad, all encompassing manner, although interestingly the report does specifically exclude some children from its remit – the small group of pupils whose maladjustment can be said to be ‘pathological’ or who are elsewhere described as ‘psychotic’ (§35 and 36). The best interpretation of the report seems to be that within the large group of children who could be described as maladjusted, some are delinquent and some others are in need of care protection. Kilbrandon also argues that the similarities between children coming before the juvenile courts outweigh the differences, regardless of the reason for their appearance. At a slight variance from the view of the Advisory Council, Kilbrandon uses a more narrow understanding of maladjustment, acknowledging that delinquency is in some (but by implication, not all) cases, ‘simply a manifestation of maladjustment or emotional disturbance’ (SED 1964a §176, p 71).

The Advisory Council reached the conclusion that offenders and non-offenders coming before the juvenile courts could both be appropriately placed in an Approved school while at the same time calling for an increase in provision of residential schools for maladjusted pupils. The *Kilbrandon Report* took this a step further and

recommended that the name 'Approved school' be dropped, partly because of negative associations; suggesting that the range of provision for 'children whose needs, for whatever reason, cannot be adequately met within the normal educational provision' (SED 1964a §185; p 75), should all be known as Residential schools. The lack of adequate provision for maladjusted pupils was again noted.

Secondly, the 'swing' towards welfare principles in the Kilbrandon Report can also be seen more accurately as a natural progression of the traditional Scottish values of respect for education. While Approved schools clearly suffered from a poor public image - regarded by some as penal institutions, as discussed above, the underlying principles were of education and training (SED 1952). There is no doubt that the Kilbrandon Report had greater consequences for social work and legal services than for education (Toman 1986), and as Bruce (1982) argues, this overlaying of social work principles in subsequent legislation masked the educational principles on which Kilbrandon was based. Bruce (1982) traces many of the ideas embodied in Kilbrandon to the influence of the model of the Scandinavian welfare system. A member of the Kilbrandon committee had recently visited Norway and reported on his findings, and a number of submissions explicitly referred to the Scandinavian experience. The lack of reference to this influence is interpreted by Bruce (1982) as resulting from the fact that the Kilbrandon committee did not view their recommendations as being based on similar welfare principles, but rather on educational ones.

The truly radical aspect of the Kilbrandon report was the recommendation that juveniles be removed from the court system altogether and be dealt with by panels of lay members. In conjunction with, 'the recognition of the needs of the child as being the first and primary consideration; the vital role of the family in tackling children's problems; and the adoption of a preventive and educational approach to these problems' (HMSO 1995: vii), this constitutes the lasting contribution of the report. Here again, the traditional Scottish value of concern for the individual and his/her education into a valuable member of society can be detected.

Kilbrandon's recommendation that all schools meeting the needs of pupils whose needs could not be adequately met in the mainstream system should be called 'Residential schools' was not immediately picked up, although the label 'Approved schools' was dropped. In 1971 the Social Work Services Group (SWSG) issued circular *SW11/71 Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968: Future Description of Approved Schools* which stated that former Approved schools were to be known as 'List D schools' (Ramage 2003). As Toman (1986) notes this was intended to be a temporary category, the name reflected the fact that when the SWSG made lists of different types of 'special' schools, the former Approved schools were on the fourth list. The seventh list of schools, List G, were for pupils with a 'variety of handicaps', and Toman (1986) records that the numbers of pupils formally identified as 'maladjusted' in these schools was on a steady incline. From Toman's description of the List G schools it would appear that many emerged out of the Therapeutic Community tradition for meeting the needs of children who were 'maladjusted'. Thus, despite Kilbrandon's plea that all young people in difficulty should be treated the same it would appear that the traditional 'offender / offended against' divide was maintained through the separate use of List D and List G schools.

In the years following the Kilbrandon Report the influence of wider social changes on educational policy can be seen, but as will be shown in the following section, the underlying ideology of Scottish education proved fertile ground for these 'new' ideas.

5. Warnock and the New Right

The decades after Kilbrandon were characterised by major social change, the post-war years of inclusion, affluence and conformity (Hobswam 1994) were replaced by the cultural revolution of the late 1960's and 70's; as Young observes: 'A world of seeming certainty was replaced by one of pluralism, debate, controversy and ambiguity' (1999:2). Halsey also describes the 1970's as witnessing the emergence of a more unequal society with a 'minority in marginal economic and social

conditions' (1989: 23). In his introduction to the reprinted Kilbrandon report, Stone (HMSO 1995) comments upon the association between poverty and issues such as neglect, disruption, delinquency, truancy, abuse.

The social changes resulting from the economic crises of the 1970's and the move from economic nationalism to globalisation (Brown *et al.* 1997) were accompanied by related changes in other areas. The collapse of the old certainties as the world 'lost its bearings and slid into instability and crisis' (Hobsbawm 1994: 403), has been variously said to have signalled the start of the 'late modern' (e.g., Young 1999) or the post-modern period (e.g., Giroux, 1997, Green 1994, Blake 1997). Whichever label is chosen, the underlying principles are based on the observation that 'contemporary societies show a new or heightened degree of fragmentation, pluralism and individualism' (Kumar, 1997: 98).

As the old patterns of power, patriarchy, authority and identity have been challenged (Giroux 1997), new forms of social organisation and identity have emerged. Oliver, one of the self-proclaimed originators of the social model of disability, notes that around the same time as he was questioning able-bodied accounts of what it meant to be disabled, 'women were beginning to reject male accounts of their experiences and black people were vehemently denying the accuracy of white descriptions of what it was like to be black' (Oliver 1996:9). This celebration of the individual experience, coupled with the tendency for people with shared experiences to join forces, led to the formation of a number of powerful lobbying and campaigning groups formed around identities of, for example, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and disability. These new social movements often employ the rhetoric of 'rights' in their arguments. The notion of rights has a long history of use in campaigns for equal treatment, for example by Women's suffrage groups on both sides of the Atlantic, Labour Rights Organisations, and later the Civil Rights Movement in the US.

Change was also occurring within the field of special education; as Wedell (1990) notes, in addition to growing pressure to recognise the rights of minority groups, research from the US had shown the importance of attending to children's needs

rather than to their category of handicap. Perhaps it was in response to these pressures that in 1973 the Warnock Committee was charged with reviewing the, 'educational provision in England, Scotland and Wales for children and young people handicapped by disabilities of body or mind' (DES 1978: 1). For Petrie (1978) the reference to 'disability of body or mind' sounded old-fashioned to people in Scotland as the understanding of disability had long since moved away from a categorisation model. While the need to distinguish groups in order to ensure the appropriate education was provided, the neat classification of types was rejected in favour of a model focusing more on the individual needs. Indeed the Warnock committee also came to this conclusion, it recommended that the statutory categorisation of handicapped pupils should be abolished, and that decisions about appropriate educational provision be taken on the basis of a 'detailed description of special educational need' (DES 1978:3.25). The Report stated that up to 20% of children would be in need of some form of special provision during their school career. Most significantly though, the report also stated that provision for special education should take place 'wherever possible' in a mainstream school. This report influenced the subsequent Education Act (1981) and Education (Scotland) Act (1981) which (in addition to implementing the recommendations outlined above) specify the procedures in relation to making a 'statement' (England or Wales) or a 'record' (Scotland) of the assessed needs of the child and how they should be provided for.

While Scottish ideology provided fertile ground for the inclusion agenda and emphasis on individual needs being met, in another important respect the 'New Right' agenda was not welcomed north of the border. As Munn (1993) notes, a feature of Conservative public sector policy since 1979 was to grant users of public services rights. This was a response to a perception on the part of the Conservatives that the welfare state was failing to deal effectively with social problems; the introduction of choice and the principles of market place was intended to raise standards (Hartley 1999). The diversification of schools was asserted as following from the moral right of parents to make choices in their children's education (Jonathan 1993). As Raab (1993) points out, this diversification was set within strict

limits controlled by central government, particularly in relation to the curriculum and formal assessment.

Legislation was introduced which permitted parents to send their children to a school other than the local one (Education (Scotland) Act 1981); which helped parents with fees for independent school (Assisted Places Scheme); and which allowed schools to opt out of local authority control and apply for self-governing status (Self-Governing Schools etc (Scotland) Act 1989). The move towards diversification and the attempts to give parents as consumers power over the 'service providers' did not materialise in Scotland to anything like the extent hoped for by the Conservatives. Pickard (1999) highlights the increasing problem of credibility which attached itself to Conservative policy in Scotland as it appeared more and more irrelevant to the Scottish context. In particular School Boards, which had been intended as a mechanism for parents to keep a check on the professionals, actually supported the professionals against the government policy on national testing. In addition, the Scottish context, with its emphasis on the social function of education, the need for a broad-based curriculum, and the postponement of selection (Hartley 1999) did not welcome the attempts to push towards diversification.

The policy and provision for pupils with SEBD since the 1980's emphasises the point that this group of pupils are a 'special case' within SEN in general. The underlying principle of the Warnock report is more akin to integration than inclusion, there is a much quoted distinction between the two:

In my view, inclusive education is essentially a system which is based on a different premise to that of integration. With the latter the education system exists and the child is negotiated into it. The onus is on the child fitting into the main system. [...] Inclusive education, on the other hand, starts from the child's right to belong.

Lindsay 1997: 95

Galloway and Goodwin (1987) observed that the Warnock report persists with the idea that there is something inherently wrong with a 'disruptive' child. Indeed the

caveat in the Warnock report that no pupil should disrupt the education of another seems to be directed at the pupil with SEBD in particular. In Scotland, Closs (1997) notes that pupils with SEBD and pupils with MLD, despite the rhetoric and the support for the comprehensive ideal, continue to be educated separately.

The fate of List D schools points up another interesting divergence from overall trends. The category was expected to be a temporary one when set up in 1971, however the debate about what to do with these schools, their role in the new system was long, drawn out, and eventually inconclusive. At the same time, the social work profession was developing and there was a move to community based solutions to problems (HMI 1990). However, Priestly (1987) is critical of what he termed the simplistic assumption that for all children foster care was a better option than a residential school. For children who have experienced the break down of their own family the prospect of joining another one is too traumatic. Waterhouse (1987) pointed to the same trend in England and Wales, adding that prospective adoptive or foster parents tend to prefer young and untraumatised children. The consequence is that the population of children's homes and residential schools changed to being predominantly older, difficult to place children. Farrell and Polat (2003) provide a summary of the key features of the typical population of residential special schools found in various studies, concluding that the young people are often:

...extremely difficult to manage in a classroom or family setting. These problems will have persisted for some time despite, or sometimes because of, the efforts of others to help. Underpinning these difficulties is a major and long-standing problem in forming lasting and close relationships with adults and children. Students placed in residential settings are almost certain to have experienced long-standing problems at home, with a higher incidence of family breakdown than is normally found in day special schools.

Farrell and Polat 2003: 279

Eventually, after failing to reach agreement, List 'D' was closed in 1986 and central government funding was withdrawn. The schools are now generally referred to as 'Residential schools'. A variety of arrangements have been entered into to preserve these schools. Some were taken over by the social work department, others have

entered into agreements with local education authorities. Others changed their remit according to demand in the market, and some became financially independent. At the time that mainstream schools were being encouraged to take funding direct from central government, although a few of the List D schools moved to the Local government stable, many did not, leaving provision for this group of pupils to be provided by independent or voluntary organisations. It would appear that, for whatever reason, the conservative government did not want the responsibility of managing educational provision for this category of pupils in Scotland.

6. *New Left*

In 1997 the newly elected Labour Government introduced a new vocabulary to the public policy agenda which became driven by the principle of 'social inclusion'. The role of schools in promoting this was seen as fundamental. While 'social inclusion' sounds like an incontrovertible good, the different meanings carried by the term have been critiqued. Levitas (1999) describes the multi-faceted nature of 'social exclusion', noting that those who are held to be outside society can be seen as excluded because they lack money, because they lack work (meaning paid employment) or because they lack morals. Levitas (1999) further argues that in the social exclusion discourse of New Labour it is the latter two interpretations which dominate. The social inclusion project thus becomes a matter of training people for work and educating people into the values of the society, hence the importance of education in realising this aim. This resonates with the historical view of education as the solution whatever the precise nature of the problem noted in Lloyd (2000) above. This shift in the underlying discourse, away from one which focused on poverty and inequalities is also noted by Thomas and Loxley (2001) who examine the term 'stakeholders', 'stakeholding is about being socially and economically included. But this is not a form of inclusion which should be seen to be synonymous with equality and redistributive justice' (Thomas and Loxley 2001: 94). In this new understanding, being included involves agreeing to abide by the rules.

Within the broader goal of 'social inclusion', lies the educational inclusion project. Under New Labour schools were required to reduce the number of pupils excluded from school (Social Exclusion Unit 1998) and to include pupils with SEN in mainstream schools wherever possible (DfEE 1997). In the 1990s and early 2000s, the 'inclusion discourse' was one of the most powerful in education policy (HMIE 2002a) evidenced by its status as one of the National Priorities (Scottish Executive 2000). This concern with inclusion can be seen partly as a natural progression of the principles of the Warnock Committee in relation to the expansion of mainstream education to more pupils and partly as a response to the wider social inclusion agenda. Perhaps, however, the most significant factor was the alarming rise in school exclusion figures reported in Parsons (1999), possibly in part a consequence of the New Right emphasis on attainment and accountability (Bridges 1994). At this time the government continued the trend towards diversification of school provision in England and Wales with initiatives such as the Education Action Zones and Foundation Schools. In Scotland the New Community Schools announced in 1998 and launched in 1999 were an attempt to both promote social inclusion and to raise attainment (Pickard and Dobie 2003). However rather than a diversification, these schools were in fact the pilots of how the Scottish Executive intends all Scottish schools to be organised by 2007 (Scottish Executive 2002, Alexiadou and Ozga 2002).

Thomas and Loxley (2001) summarise the policy changes brought in by the New Left as continuing the New Right movement to market ideology in the public services, but attempting to combine these ideals with more socially concerned policies. Similarly Alexiadou and Ozga see the election of the New Labour government in 1997 as marking 'another phase in modernisation rather than a new departure' (Alexiadou and Ozga 2002: 679). The result, argue Thomas and Loxley (2001), is an education policy based on New Right principles, which is anti-inclusion, and placed on top of that are special education policies which are, at least notionally, inclusive.

7. Devolution

The policy-making community in Scotland from 1872 onwards had been led by the Scottish Education Department, in particular the schools' inspectors. Local authorities, teacher unions, teacher training colleges and, from 1965, the General Teaching Council were also centrally involved. Access to this community was often by way of the Kirriemuir career outlined above. In 1999 an interesting policy-making climate was created as the Westminster government's emphasis on 'economy and efficiency' met this Scottish context, in particular the 'assumptive worlds of policy-makers, and the shaping myths on which they drew' (Alexiadou and Ozga 2002: 678). Paterson (2000a) foresaw two possible futures for the relationship between the new parliament and the established policy community - one in which they get along well and the other in which they compete for leadership. Whilst the Scottish Parliament is still in its infancy it is perhaps too early to draw firm conclusions about the impact of devolution on educational policy making: however, Alexiadou and Ozga (2002) give some clue as to the direction things may be moving. From interviews with 'system actors' in Scotland they conclude that 'devolution appeared to offer opportunities for the reassertion of older models of public service and 'policy community', with an element of widespread consultation with the public' (Alexiadou and Ozga, 2002: 690).

This commitment to public consultation was evident in the National Debate on Education, to which 1,500 responses were received representing the direct involvement of around 20,000 people. Whether because of the unfamiliarity of being asked for their views, or because of the loyalty to the traditional academic curriculum delivered in schools noted by Paterson (2003), the debate produced little in the way of 'blue-sky' thinking. The large majority of respondents expressed support for the current comprehensive system and for the teachers who work in it. However, in relation to the curriculum some issues emerged, in particular concern that individual needs must be met, and that the balance between knowledge and skills should be addressed. There were calls for less emphasis on academic subjects and more on 'soft-skills' which are held to increase 'employability' (Macleod 2003). It can be seen that the commitment to the comprehensive ideal was balanced by a concern for

the welfare of individuals, again reflecting long established tensions between collective and individual rights.

The first education legislation to be passed by the newly formed Scottish Parliament was the *Standards in Scottish Schools etc Act* (2000) which included a requirement of mainstreaming. There are three possible exceptions to this requirement, if it were not in the pupil's best interests, if it would adversely affect the other pupils who would be educated alongside, or if it was prohibitively expensive, once again pupils with SEBD appear to have been given an exemption clause. More recent legislation affecting Scottish education includes the *Great Britain Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001* (the second part of which relating to anti discrimination applies to Scotland), and the *Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002* which requires education providers to improve accessibility to school facilities and the curriculum for pupils with disabilities (SEED 2003).

The *Education (Additional Support for Learning) Act* was passed in April 2004. This Act includes the replacement of the terminology of 'Special Educational Needs' with 'Additional Support Needs' which offers a much wider definition. For example, it includes pupils whose personal or life circumstances present temporary barriers to learning, children with English as an additional language, and some Gypsy/Traveller children who may have disrupted education. Assessment is to focus on the abilities of the individual in an attempt to move away from deficit models. Records of Needs are replaced with Co-ordinate Support Plans (CSP). The Act also places a duty on other agencies to provide support as requested by education authorities, and provides parents with the right to make placing requests to independent special schools. Overall the response to the changes has been favourable, in particular the change in terminology and increased participation for parents were widely welcomed. The CSPs have been treated with more caution: there is concern that the criteria for opening a CSP are set too high, and it has been argued that what makes a difference to a young person is the appropriate resources being supplied, not the terminology (Children in Scotland 2003).

At the same time as the Additional Support Needs legislation was being guided through parliament, the Scottish Executive introduced a second piece of legislation, *The Anti-Social Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004* which is relevant to some young people with SEBD as well as other groups. In part the Act makes provision for established orders (Anti-Social Behaviour and Restriction of Liberty Orders) to be extended to children over 12 years but under 16. It also introduces Parenting Orders, Community Reparation Orders and the possibility of 'monitoring' restrictions on movements imposed by a children's hearing. In effect it would appear that elements of the adult criminal justice system are being extended to children in a reversal of the movement prompted by Kilbrandon away from a punitive model of intervention. This is reflected in the responses to consultation: whilst interested organisations recognise that antisocial behaviour can be a problem, there is less agreement on the appropriateness of the powers proposed by the Bill for tackling this problem. Of particular concern is the extent to which the new powers appear to supplant the work of the children's hearing system, and the lack of adequate reference to additional measures of support for young people. The proposals are viewed as in stark contrast to other Scottish Executive initiatives for dealing with vulnerable groups, and as taking a simplistic view on the causes and solutions to antisocial behaviour (Scottish Parliament Communities Committee 2004).

The presence of these two Acts before Parliament at the same time highlights the persistence of the historical dichotomy between treatment/welfare and punitive approaches to dealing with children whose behaviour causes adults concern. The New Labour approach to policy-making has been described as 'managerialist' (Alexiadou and Ozga 2002), the primary concern is to develop policy which is effective and cost-efficient. Parsons (2005) notes the presence of a strong retributive perspective in public opinion and the tendency of governments to opt for policies which are both popular and cheap. This leads, he argues, to governments being more likely to adopt punitive rather than welfare approaches to offending behaviour of all kinds. It may be that in the drive to find something that 'works', and works quickly and cheaply, government has resorted to older authoritarian methods, in frustration at

the apparent failure of longer-term 'fixes'. Of course, if one takes the view that a fundamental underlying factor in the creation of SEBD is structural inequality then it is difficult to see how any intervention could be cheap, quick *and* successful.

Another recurring theme in Scottish Education has been the value placed on traditional academic subjects. The Conservative government's attempts to introduce the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) in 1984 was strongly resisted in Scotland as it was considered a potential threat to the comprehensive ideal (Paterson 2003). Further moves to re-examine the secondary curriculum were launched by Michael Forsyth, the Secretary of State in 1994, in the *Higher Still Development Programme* (SOED 1994). This was prompted by a number of concerns: increasing numbers of pupils staying on for S5 and S6; a feeling that vocational courses offered by Further Education colleges were undervalued (Pickard and Dobie 2003); and the need for a higher standard of exam to control university entry (Paterson 2003). Rather than developing separate vocational and academic tracks which would have run counter to the traditional Scottish value of expanding access to academic education, all courses were organised under one framework overseen by the newly appointed Scottish Qualifications Authority (Paterson 2003). These reforms have not been without their critics, in particular the view that the vocational elements have diluted academic standards is common (Paterson 2000b) and not entirely unexpected.

More recently, the issue of alternatives to a traditional academic education has been raised through the work of the Discipline Task Group which was established in December 2000 'in response to concerns expressed over indiscipline in Scottish schools.' (SEED 2001a: 1). The Task group noted existing good practice in curriculum flexibility, (SEED2001b §3.3) which was being used not only with pupils with SEBD but also the much larger group of bored or uninspired pupils. The first recommendation of the Task Group was that 'The Scottish Executive should provide guidance to all schools on the degree of curricular flexibility available within current guidelines to enable them to take account of local circumstances and meet individual pupil needs' (SEED 2001a: 11). The Executive responded swiftly with Circular

3/2001 (SEED 2001c), and in more detail with the *Curriculum Flexibility* document in 2003 (HMIE 2003a).

How can this apparent move away from the ‘one-size fits all’ academic curriculum be reconciled with what we know about the traditional views of the people of Scotland on what constitutes a ‘good education’? The first thing to say is that the valuing of a broad academic curriculum is not a thing of the past: as noted above, Higher Still reforms are not without their critics. Secondly, while Alexiadou and Ozga (2002) found the Scottish ‘policy community’ alive and well, and the ‘shaping myth’ continuing to exert influence, policy-making does not take place in a vacuum. Many of the identified trends in Scottish education, including the attempt to break down the distinction between academic and vocational are common to Western Education as a whole (Brown, Halsey, Lauder and Wells 1997). Indeed Raffe (2003) cautions that an emphasis on the ‘myth’ as the key perspective from which to examine Scottish education can exaggerate its distinctiveness. The trend towards a global economy - and all the consequent implications for the labour market - along with the dominance of the social inclusion agenda, in particular the importance attached to employment as a measure of inclusion, combine to emphasise the central role of school education in producing individuals with ‘employability’.

Thirdly, and in addition to economic imperatives, it could be argued that the ‘inclusion agenda’ has also had an influence. The recent guidance on curriculum flexibility, and to some extent Higher Still can be seen as influenced by the need for the education system to respond to the presence in mainstream schools of non-traditional students. If non-academic students still left school at 15 and disaffected, demotivated, disengaged and learning disabled students had continued to be educated elsewhere it seems unlikely that the pressure to adapt the mainstream curriculum would have been so strong.

Finally, it remains to be seen how the recommendations for curriculum flexibility and the range of qualifications offered through Higher Still play out in practice. Two scenarios seem possible: one in which all students take an individually tailored

programme of study including elements of academic, 'life-skills' and vocational courses - all with parity of esteem; and the other in which a twin-track emerges, with academic and vocational training as distinct alternatives. If history is any guide it may be that the former possibility will prevail; the most recent comparison is the attempt by the conservative government in the mid-eighties to introduce TVEI. The ensuing process has been described as one of 'domestication' (Bell, Howieson, King and Raffe 1989) as the new initiative was accommodated in such a way as to preserve the established order.

8. Inclusion and SEBD – a 'special' special case?

It has been noted above in the discussion of List 'D' schools that provision for pupils with SEBD has not followed the same pattern as that for other categories of need. MacKay, Grieve and Glashan (2003) have observed that, 'Current educational policy in the UK is permeated by the rhetoric of "inclusive education"' (2003:1). Despite the dominance of the inclusion agenda, pupils with SEBD, along with pupils with moderate learning difficulties, continue to be educated outside the mainstream (Farrell 2001, Closs 1997). This section will explore two explanations of why pupils with SEBD form this 'special' special group. The first of these explanations considers the inclusion of pupils with SEBD in relation to the 'rights agenda'; the second examines how these pupils fair under the notion of 'valuing diversity'

In the area of special education 'rights-based' arguments are frequently used in support of the education of all pupils in their local school, however such arguments are not unproblematic. One strand of the rights agenda in special education emerges from the UN Convention (1989) ratified by the UK in 1991. Writing on Inclusion in this tradition, informed by the literature of civil and disability rights movements and appealing to the UN Convention for its authority, often has limitations

There is a tendency amongst stakeholders to underestimate, or ignore completely, the complexity of the philosophical basis of these arguments. Rights are assumed to be

applicable in an unproblematic way, for example the notion of conflicting rights is rarely mentioned in literature in this 'civil rights' tradition. Low (2001) observes that rights are usually portrayed as absolute, without need for consideration of factors such as cost, and possible alternatives. In relation to pupils with SEBD, the notion of conflicting rights relates to the rights of different individuals. The presence of these pupils in schools may have implications for the educational experience of other pupils. The right of a pupil to be educated in mainstream may come into conflict with the rights of the mainstream peers to an uninterrupted educational experience. As Visser and Stokes observe, 'it is seen as a right for pupils with special educational needs in general to access a mainstream place. Yet for the pupil with emotional and behavioural difficulties the right can justifiably be taken away due to his or her special educational need' (2003: 71).

The second explanation of why the inclusion of pupils with SEBD is a special case relates to the notion of 'valuing diversity'. As Benjamin (2002a) observes 'valuing diversity', with its origins in the principles of modern liberalism clearly detectable, is rapidly becoming one of the dominant narratives in the literature on inclusion. Benjamin argues that while the terminology may be new, the relations of inequality which it masks are the same as always. The use of language such as 'valuing diversity' sits alongside the assertion that inclusion is about all pupils not just some (Slee and Allan 2001), and MacKay's (2002) hope that disability can become accepted as part of normality. Benjamin's (2002a) observations of a London girls' school demonstrate how far the education system remains from these ideals. Only some pupils, the *really* different ones, were allowed to have their success measured in a different way, the main body of pupils continued to be measured against the standards of the school system. Far from including this minority group, this in fact further marked them out as different from their peers.

Improving standards is only one of the purposes of schooling, another is the socialisation of children into the norms of society. Whereas the presence of pupils with most other SENs contributes to the socialisation of mainstream peers into a diverse society, the presence of pupils with SEBD does not. The socially inclusive

society, which our schools are preparing our young people for, continues to exclude individuals who exhibit the types of behaviours associated with SEBD. The result is that pupils with SEBD who present with challenging behaviour at school are less likely to have their 'diversity' valued than other groups. In addition to the issue of socialisation of mainstream peers, there is a supplementary explanation for this limit on acceptable diversity.

This explanation relates to the type of diversity presented. It is interesting to note that one of the girls in Benjamin's study, the one who 'presents much more of a challenge to good governance' (Benjamin 2002b: 316), was moved to special provision. However the school was able to accommodate the pupil who was seen as in need of help and vulnerable, evoking feelings of compassion from the teaching staff. It may be that the difference lies in what the presence of different pupils in the school allows the staff to feel about themselves. Pupils with SEBD are more likely to arouse feelings such as helplessness, fear and frustration and to challenge teachers' views of their own competence, than to provoke protective instincts. In other words, not only do SEBD pupils challenge a key purpose of schooling, but also do so in a way which does not present any advantage to the school.

It is ironic that the social inclusion agenda, which has done so much in terms of moving special education policy forward to the current situation where there is a presumption of mainstream for all pupils, is the same agenda that gives legitimacy to the notion that pupils with SEBD are an exception. The burden placed on education to solve the problem of social exclusion has meant that it is difficult to find a place in schools for pupils who appear not to opt in to the same shared values. This echoes the suggestion by Thomas and Loxley (2001) above that the meaning of inclusion has undergone a subtle shift, and it is one which serves to exclude young people with SEBD in particular.

Conclusion

This chapter began with a discussion of the problematic nature of the term SEBD. In the second section particular features of the Scottish context were described, although it was noted that it has been argued that there is a tendency to over-estimate the extent to which Scotland constitutes a special case. In section three the history of provision and policy relating to young people with SEBD in Scotland was outlined. Finally it was argued that within the area of special educational needs, pupils said to have SEBD are treated differently by the system and possible explanations for this different treatment were suggested.

Chapter 2

Introduction

This chapter will summarise the existing literature on provision in the United Kingdom for pupils who have attracted the label 'SEBD'. The main studies in the area of SEBD provision can be organised according to research design. Four main categories emerge, the first is the records of the work of practitioners, written by practitioners in the early days of special schools for the 'maladjusted'. These were often 'therapeutic communities' in which the primary focus was not always on education. Two writers provide an overview of the work in this tradition, Laslett (1977, 1983) and Bridgeland (1971). In the second category are major enquiries into provision for maladjusted children on a National (England and Wales) basis. The first of these studies is the Schools Council Project, reported in Wilson and Evans (1980) and Dawson (1980), and the second is the more recent work of Cole *et al.* (1998). In addition a study into provision in Scotland (HMI 1990) will also be examined. As will be discussed, these studies were influenced by the growing concern with school effectiveness from the 1970s onwards; the more recent emergence of research into 'what works?' will also be examined. Alongside these large-scale projects, which used surveys as the primary research method, has been the third category of research in this area, smaller-scale more qualitative studies. Finally, the fourth category is research which sought to hear the views of former pupils of SEBD provision. In this chapter studies in each of these categories will be summarised and key findings reported. Following the analysis of the four categories of research the emerging themes will be discussed. This chapter will conclude with an indication of the ways in which this thesis aims to fill some gaps in the existing research.

1. Practitioner –based enquiries

From the 1940s onwards a group of practitioners from within SEBD provision began to emerge, members of which have been referred to by the umbrella term ‘Pioneers’. Although they may not have considered themselves a group there are enough common themes in their theory and practice, which can broadly be labelled ‘therapeutic education’, to merit the designation.

Craig Fees, archivist at the Planned Environment Therapy Trust has clearly indicated the problematic nature of tracing the origins of the therapeutic community (otherwise ‘milieu therapy’). Quite apart from wrestling with competing definitions, lack of historical discussion, and its substantially different signification in the US, is the general agreement that milieu therapy and the therapeutic community actually existed sometime before they were recorded as such (Fees 1998). Bridgeland makes the point that, ‘Few of the pioneers began with a concept to which they adhered in practice but rather the concept was evolved through practice’ (1971: 24).

The origins of ‘therapeutic education’ are various. It can perhaps best be seen as a coming-together of a number of determinants: therapeutic work in the area of mental health, progressive education, psychodynamic theory, and charismatic individuals. It may be that the catalyst in this melting pot was the Second World War. Some communities (e.g., The Barns Experiment, Mulberry Busy, Chaigley Manor) were established to accommodate school-age evacuees. The Northfield ‘Experiment’ involved work in a military hospital with soldiers who had been injured and were to return to action. In addition, Kennard (1983) discusses other influences around the same time that made the post-war period fertile ground for therapeutic communities.

Bridgeland (1971) cites Anna Freud as one of the psychoanalysts who was most influential on the pioneers. She focussed on the ‘ego’ more than the ‘id’ and on the overt behaviour of the child rather than subconscious activity. Once again the War was a key factor as it created the opportunity for Freud to make observations of how children responded to trauma. What she discovered was that young children seemed

to be more distressed by the short absence of their mother than by bombing and other stress triggers.

Although some schools offered explicit psychotherapy (e.g., Otto Shaw's Red Hill), as Cole notes, a therapeutic community is one in which:

The milieu in which the child spends the other twenty-three hours is as important as the hour he spends alone with the psychotherapist. Teachers and RSWs [residential social workers] are as influential as the psychotherapist and should... use the daily routine. . .as a medium for aiding children's social and emotional development

Cole 1986: 43

Cole goes on to describe four key features of a therapeutic community – democracy, permissiveness, communalism and reality-confrontation.

There is a body of literature from practitioners in the therapeutic tradition, a comprehensive overview of which is provided by Bridgeland (1971), who reports the work of 'pioneers' such as Homer Lane and David Wills. The strength of these works is also their weakness; they are detailed descriptions of the everyday routines of communities written by men who are both the founders and leaders. The unhappy boys at odds with society (Wills 1945) are affectionately brought to life through anecdotes; the organisation of the communities recorded in minute detail in the hope that others might try to replicate them. However these writings, invaluable as they are in developing an understanding of the ethos of these schools, are a long way from representing rigorous and objective records. In addition, despite these communities catering for school-age children there is little information in the reports as to the provision made for education. The exception to this is the work of Shaw (1969) who was the founder of Red Hill school for maladjusted boys (and originally girls) of above average academic ability. Not only was Shaw concerned with the educational experience of his pupils but also, unlike most of the pioneers, he attempted to evaluate the effectiveness of his school presaging the effective schools movement. Shaw gathered information on nearly 400 former pupils of Red Hill, 361 of whom he

included in his analysis, concluding that 11% of them were 'failures', all others showing some signs of being cured, improved, or both (Shaw 1969).

The therapeutic approach was not, however, without its critics. For example, Millham, Bullock and Cherrett (1975) carried out a comparative study of the experiences of boys in approved schools concluding that regimes that emphasised strict discipline along with pastoral care were most effective. They were particularly critical of schools adopting a therapeutic approach in which there appeared to be a lack of organisation and explicit goals for the pupils.

2. A note on effectiveness and 'what works'

A concern with the evaluation of effectiveness of SEBD provision has dominated the literature since the late 1970s; however as shall be seen there remains no standard set of agreed criteria. This concern with effectiveness mirrors a similar concern in mainstream education (Silver 1994, Reynolds and Cuttance 1992). The effective schools movement grew out of research findings from the United States (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Weinfield and York 1966, Jencks 1972) which appeared to indicate that schools had minimal effects on their pupils. Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore and Ouston (1979) questioned these findings, arguing that it was the measures employed which resulted in no effects being found. They argued that when looking at more 'fuzzy' elements of the school experience real effects could be measured, although they do not challenge Bernstein's proposition that schools cannot compensate for the inequalities of society (Bernstein 1970). Rutter and his colleagues coined the term 'ethos' to describe the institutional effect formed by the combination of a number of different factors within the school culture. In assessing the effectiveness or otherwise of the schools in the study, Rutter *et al.* (1979) used four main measures: 'attendance, pupil behaviour, examination success and delinquency' (1979: 66). As noted by Cole *et al.* (1998) the large body of research on effective schools identified, and agreed on, key characteristics said to improve the performance of schools on measures of attainment, attendance and

behaviour. However, there is a problem, as Cooper (2001) observes: 'The impetus for making schools more "effective" lies primarily in the desire to make them more successful in producing students with the skills and abilities required by the economy' (2001: 52). In this environment one of the key characteristics associated with effective schools – namely valuing all pupils, becomes problematic, particularly in relation to the inclusion of pupils who attract the SEBD label.

According to Rutter *et al.* (1979) an effective school is one whose students are well behaved, pass exams and who don't offend and don't truant. And while Cole *et al.* (1998) conclude that HMI are correct in seeing no significant difference between effective teaching of mainstream pupils and effective teaching of pupils with SEBD, it is not clear that the same criteria of effectiveness can be used in special as in mainstream schools. For example Shaw (1969) was concerned with his former pupils' ability to sustain adult relationships; Balbernie (1966) was similarly interested in the quality of former pupils' family relationships as well as their employment history. In relation to separate schools for pupils with SEBD the concept of 'effectiveness' is often conflated with 'good practice' (e.g. Cole *et al.* 1998:2) but identification of good practice seems to depend on personal testimony (albeit triangulated) rather than an objective set of measures. Indeed, these studies, rather than seeking to measure schools against existing criteria, look at schools which are anecdotally held to be effective and attempt to identify commonalities. The outcome is, in the case of Cole *et al.* (1998), a description of features of population, people, provision and place which are found in effective schools, rather than a list of criteria by which to measure effectiveness. The lack of agreed criteria specific to SEBD provision is a concern; whilst it may suggest a lack of clarity, or indeed agreement, around what these schools are trying to achieve, it could be viewed more positively as a consequence of different provision having different (but equally valid) aims. Perhaps Laslett's observation that 'there appears to be a remarkable resistance among those who work in [special schools for the maladjusted] to assess the effectiveness of what they are doing' (1977: x) was a reflection of this difficulty in establishing agreed criteria.

In conclusion, it would seem reasonable to suggest that if a school is to be assessed for effectiveness it should be clear what criteria are being used, and to what extent the criteria match the stated aims of the school. For example, a school which aims to provide an alternative to mainstream education should not be assessed according to the numbers of pupils it reintegrates to mainstream. However, it should also be remembered that the suggestion that 'special' criteria may be important is not to deny that SEBD schools should be aiming to improve exam success, attendance and behaviour.

This concern with 'effectiveness' which has been in evidence for over twenty years has more recently been over-shadowed by the arrival of the 'what works?' research agenda. This agenda is driven by the demand for evidence-based research to inform policy, as Furlong (2004) comments, 'the role of research under New Labour...is to influence the world of practice by finding out "what works" ' (2004: 345). In addition, this type of research is also used to establish criteria for evaluation and to inform judgements about cost-effectiveness. This increase in demand for evidence seems to have highlighted existing tensions within the educational research community over questions concerning the quality and nature of its work, with old battle-lines between neo-realists and relativists opening up (Furlong 2004). At the centre of the debate is the issue of the extent to which it is possible for generalisations about 'what works' to be made in the field of education. Elliot (2001) contrasts the views of Hargreaves (1999), who sees exceptions to generalisations as serving to refine the 'rule' with those of MacIntyre (1981), who argues that there is no 'cumulative effect' and that the predictive power of generalisations is limited. While Hargreaves' approach lends itself to large-scale randomised controlled trials as found in medical sciences, MacIntyre's would tend towards smaller-scale, context specific, case study research.

In relation to young people with SEBD, it has been argued that 'what works' research, has an important contribution to make, but that it is important to resist the temptation to assume that its findings are generalisable: ' "Successful" interventions should be compared over time in order to draw out common features. Attention can

then turn to examining how these common characteristics can be developed across different situations, what barriers there might be to their implementation, and any implications for training, resources or policy' (Macleod and Munn 2004: 175)

3. National studies

Wilson and Evans (1980) and Dawson (1980) report on a survey of 'best practice' in special schools for children with EBD in England and Wales, the Schools Council project. The University of Birmingham research team carried out a larger survey of all EBD provision, again only in England and Wales and again focusing on good practice, this is reported in Cole *et al.* (1998). HMI (1990) reports on the findings of survey based research into the provision for pupils with SEBD in Scotland in 1986-1988. This section will present a summary of these studies along with key findings.

3.1 England and Wales

Both Wilson and Evans (1980) and Dawson (1980) report on the Schools Council's study of the theory and practice of educational work with disturbed children. While Dawson (1980) deals largely with findings from a questionnaire to the schools, Wilson and Evans' work 'contains a wider range of information, opinion and comment' Wilson and Evans (1980: 13), drawing as it does on observations and discussions in addition to the questionnaires. At an early stage of the study a decision was made to focus on good practice, and on the curriculum in its widest sense.

Questionnaires were sent to all (188 including 10 pilot) schools for maladjusted children on the DES Lists and also to other schools nominated as having good practice in working with disturbed children. The questionnaires were followed up by visits to 56 schools for maladjusted pupils; schools were selected as those 'where we could expect to find work of a high standard' (Wilson and Evans 1980: 54). During these one-day visits the research team observed and talked with pupils, examined

schoolwork, had discussions with staff, and had access to school records and information on former pupils. Longer visits of 2 or 3 days were made to seven schools and during these questionnaires were presented to senior pupils. Visits were also made to mainstream schools and special units.

Dawson identifies two key features of work with disturbed pupils which are both widely used and are judged to be effective, these are 'the quality and nature of interpersonal relationships' and 'improvement of self-image through success' (Dawson 1980: 72). Wilson and Evans describe the essential feature of a staff-pupil relationships as 'the desire and ability to convey to the pupil the feeling that he matters and that the adult is prepared to take action on his behalf' (1980: 158). The importance attached to education in separate schools has changed over the years. As we have seen the early Pioneers, with the exception of Otto Shaw, paid scant attention to matters of schooling. The view that emotional disturbance must be addressed before effective learning can take place was still found by Wilson and Evans, but it was not widespread in the schools which they studied. The belief that education is an important element in the 'treatment' of maladjusted pupils was much more common. A challenging curriculum was felt to allow children to achieve success with positive repercussions for self-image. Overall Wilson and Evans (1980) found that the curriculum in separate schools had an emphasis on basic skills, with physical activity and craft-work taking up much of the remaining curricular time. Other subjects such as history, geography and science were also offered. While 'painting' was a feature of nearly all schools, music and drama were less common. A tendency to combine formal, teacher-led, highly structured methods in the classroom with more activities outside the classroom was noted, 'the formal work in the classroom was [so] often balanced by periods of relative freedom in play, practical work and outside visits' (Wilson and Evans 1980: 150).

This was the first large-scale study of provision for disturbed pupils, and as such had to focus on the 'big picture'. The authors comment that they would have liked more time to conduct in-depth studies and note the absence of the voice of parents, but they hoped that theirs would serve as a basis for such work in the future.

Cole *et al.* (1998) conducted a study of all EBD provision in England and Wales in 1996/7. Once again the main focus was on identifying good practice, and once again the method used was a combination of questionnaire (to 283 schools, 156 were returned) and visits to schools; OFSTED reports on over 80 schools were also analysed. Whilst the focus was identifying good practice the research team also visited schools judged by OFSTED to be 'failing'. The study used an adapted and updated version of the questionnaire employed in the Schools Council Project. In particular, alterations were made to the 'educational treatment' section to reflect the introduction of the National Curriculum; other questions on policy impact were also included.

Cole *et al.* (1998) identify 4 key variables in what they term 'proficient' schools: population, people, provision, and place. In particular, the calibre and attitudes of people who work in the schools and the existence of organised programmes and policies are seen as fundamental to success. The study was particularly concerned to assess current opinion on what the content of the educational curriculum should be. Cole *et al.* (1998) note the ongoing debate between those for and against the delivery of a 'mainstream' curriculum in a 'special' setting. While recent reforms had allowed greater flexibility in the curriculum, OFSTED inspectors were finding increasing numbers of schools to have serious weaknesses in curriculum provision.

Cole *et al.* (1998) report 'a clear majority had at least some positive comments to make on the National Curriculum' (1998: 100), but there were concerns about the ability of schools to both meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the individual social and emotional needs of the pupils (73% 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed to some extent' with this suggestion). In addition, the curriculum was thought by many to be overloaded, restricting the amount of time which could be spent on core skills. Interestingly, Cooper seems to put a stronger interpretation on Cole *et al.*'s (1998) findings. He writes 'This is a striking indictment of effects of educational reforms on the ability of special schools to address the social and emotional needs of vulnerable and often distressed student' (2001: 61). Cole *et al.* (1998) also found

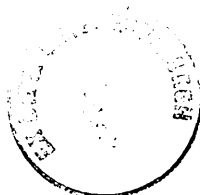
evidence of qualifications other than the traditional GSCE's being used, typically in Basic Skills or vocational subjects, but note concern as to their 'currency' in the employment market.

In terms of delivery of the curriculum the study reached similar conclusions to the Schools' Council Project: successful teaching of pupils with EBD involves much the same as successful teaching of any group. This argument, that there is no such thing as a 'special pedagogy' has been made more recently by Florian (2005) and Lewis and Norwich (2005) who argue that difference is only in terms of 'degrees of deliberateness and intensity of teaching' (2005: 214). Organisation, knowledge of the learner and the subject matter, structured learning broken into small steps, and work that is challenging but manageable were as important as the personal characteristics of the teachers. Interestingly, Cole *et al.* (1998) found that despite the massive changes in the legislation and guidelines governing curriculum, the typical amount of time spent on each curriculum area was very similar to that reported by Dawson (1980). They note that this does seem to be at odds with the general agreed wisdom about changes in curriculum from 'counselling and table-tennis' to 'mainstream'.

3.2 Scotland

Choosing with Care (HMI 1990) is a report by HM inspectors based on a survey carried out in Scotland during 1986-88. Once again, one of the four main aims was an evaluation of effectiveness of alternative provision for pupils with SEBD. Effectiveness in this report is expressed both as 'cost effectiveness' and 'educational effectiveness'. Other aims were to identify reasons for the provision, policies relating to it and an examination of it. Over 60 schools or units were visited, the methods used are not clear from the report, but it appears to be largely based on observation, with little or no involvement of parents or pupils.

In relation to measuring effectiveness the report notes that local authorities were having difficulty in evaluating provision because of a 'variety of imponderables'



(HMI 1990:35) such as benefits to pupils and their families, to the mainstream staff and pupils in the schools they would otherwise have been in, and to the wider community. The report suggests some qualitative criteria which might be used, such as improved attitude to learning, although by their nature these rely heavily on subjective judgement. The report concludes with the statement , ‘the overall effectiveness of provision for children with behavioural, emotional, or social problems is not easy to measure’ (HMI 1990:38).

The Inspectors report finding a diversity of provision across many dimensions including interventions, curriculum, integration, and parental involvement. In addition, the experience of any pupil appears to have been a matter of geographical accident as much as design. In relation to learning and teaching, at the primary level the report notes the tendency towards a narrow curriculum, with drama, music and science particularly neglected. They also note the lack of progress of some pupils. At the secondary level the curriculum also gave cause for concern. The report’s authors note the differing attitudes of practitioners on the issue of what curriculum is appropriate for these pupils. Social and Life skills, a mainstream curriculum, basic skills, and a primary curriculum all had supporters. In some cases different teachers within the same establishment were found to have fundamentally different views which they implemented. Concern was also expressed at both the quantity and quality of work produced by some pupils in some provision.

Overall the provision for learning was found to be subordinate to the provision for care, ‘The ordering of priority in most establishments was reflected in the contrast [...] between the excellence of record-keeping and planning for care and the uneven quality of documentation and preparation for learning’ (HMI 1990: 32). The Inspectors regard this as unfortunate given the potential ‘rehabilitation’ which can follow from a pupil experiencing success, something which requires a well planned programme of work.

A subsequent survey by HM Inspectors of Education, *Standards and Quality in Special Schools: 1998-2002* (HMIE 2003b) was based on the inspection reports on

65 special schools covering a wide range of special educational needs, however schools for pupils with SEBD are sometimes singled out for comment. This survey found that some of the issues identified in 1990 persisted, in particular, 'The curriculum had major weaknesses in around 20% of schools for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties' (HMIE 2003b: 9), and 'Only around 50% of the schools for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties had sufficient resources to provide for a suitable broad and balanced curriculum' (HMIE 2003b: 20). In addition, the report identified that 'aggressive behaviour towards their peers and staff, leading to disrupted lessons, was a recurring problem in a high proportion of these schools' (HMIE 2003b: 17).

4. Smaller scale qualitative studies

Grimshaw and Berridge (1994) conducted a study of 4 schools, with a focus on placement and progress. Cooper (1993a) reports a study which sought to investigate the educational experience of boys in two residential schools. Once again the focus is on good practice, '*It is the author's intention to draw to attention examples of conspicuous good practice in a neglected, often misrepresented and maligned field*' (1993a: 5, italics in original).

Grimshaw and Berridge (1994) investigated the placement and progress of children in residential schools for pupils with SEBD in England and Wales. The purpose was to examine the process of referral and to investigate the pupils' characteristics at the time of admission. It was also intended to look at the outcomes of a year's schooling. Four schools were sampled according to both school and pupil characteristics. As the study progressed it became clear that each school also had a distinctive ethos, representing some of the well-known approaches to working with pupils with SEBD. A variety of methods were used: interviews with head teachers and pupils, observation, analysis of referral papers, assessment schedules on pupils completed by teachers and care staff, and finally postal questionnaires for parents.

This study represents a major contribution to our knowledge of how children come to be placed in residential schools and how their progress there can be assessed.

Grimshaw and Berridge identified different routes on how children come to be assessed and referred, according to how much agreement there is across key groups as to the nature of the difficulty. On the issue of effectiveness of residential schooling, Grimshaw and Berridge point to the difficulties inherent in trying to compare outcomes for pupils with what their outcomes would have been had they not been referred. They do, however indicate the importance of taking a broad view of 'progress' and not restricting it to simply educational or behavioural assessment.

Cooper (1993a) carried out a study of the experience of boys in two residential schools for students with emotional and behavioural difficulties. A main focus of the study was the pupils' perspective. Cooper interviewed 24 boys aged 14 and over, the intention was to allow the boys to talk about issues which were of relevance to them. To this end Cooper used open-ended interviews, borrowing from the techniques of person-centred counselling.

Three themes emerged from the study which Cooper summarises under the headings, Respite, Relationships and Re-signification. The boys in Cooper's study talked about getting a break from trouble and stress at home, in their family or in mainstream school. It is interesting to note that Grimshaw and Berridge (1994) found evidence that residential placement allowed pupils to renew relationships at home in a positive way, rather than simply offering respite. The pupils also talked about the positive relationships they had developed with members of staff. Finally, Cooper identifies a process of re-signification, by which pupils come to have more positive views of themselves as a result of interacting with adults who hold positive views about them and as a consequence of experiencing success.

Cooper's study is a welcome shift in focus towards the experience of the 'customers' of separate provision. In some respects it confirms what other studies had suggested, in particular in relation to the importance of good pupil-staff relationships, and how such relationships can be described. However the finding relating to re-signification,

whilst echoing what providers of separate provision have long argued, that raising self-esteem is a key outcome of their work, sits uncomfortably with the assumption that education in a special school is stigmatising. As Norwich notes 'One of the key positions in the policy deliberations has been that integration is likely to reduce the stigma associated with going to special school' (Norwich 1997: 39).

The things that make Cooper's study powerful can, paradoxically, also be seen as weaknesses. The fact that Cooper was working as a teacher in one of the schools at the time of the study may have meant the interviews started from a basis of trust, allowing pupils to feel able to 'open up'. However as Cooper (1995) acknowledges there are well-documented concerns about the dual role of teacher and researcher, in particular in relation to issues of power and expectations. Cooper took great care to use a style of interviewing which would create an environment in which pupils might feel free to set the agenda, but also meant that specific issues could not be addressed. Cooper has created an important basis on which follow-up research might be conducted, research which might ask about specific aspects of pupils' experience.

5. *Former pupils*

In addition to the above studies, much of the work that has been done in trying to evaluate specialist provision has generally been carried out by practitioners in their own institution. Peacock (1985) provides an overview of postgraduate research into maladjustment in Scotland, the large majority of which has been done in the different researchers' places of work. Lloyd-Smith and Dwyfor -Davies' (1995) book *On the Margins* presents a number of studies, by practitioners, which aimed at hearing the voice of the children who were in or had attended separate provision. The experiences of the pupils is also the focus for studies by Jahnukainen (2001) and Farrell and Polat (2003) who carried out follow-up studies of former pupils of separate provision.

Jahnukainen interviewed 23 pupils (18 male, 5 female) who had been in special classes for pupils with EBD located in mainstream schools in Finland.

Jahnukainen's premise is that support for full inclusion is generally based on ideology rather than research. He is concerned therefore to examine how these former pupils experienced their education, and the consequences of their special placement for their life-course. Jahnukainen notes findings from the first part of his study which suggest that former EBD pupils, although at higher risk of dropping out of further education, could nevertheless be classified as 'ordinary citizens without signs of exclusion or disadvantage at the age of 25' (2001:152). Through interviews he was able to identify emerging themes in the young people's stories.

Both positive and negative aspects of being in a special EBD class were identified. What emerges from Jahnukainen's study is the central importance of teachers in determining the school experiences of pupils. Not only were the special class teachers identified as the most positive thing by 21 out of the 23 students, but teachers were also significant in relation to pupils' general attitude to school. Jahnukainen notes that, 'One might expect that these pupils, if any, would dislike school most. And so they did, but the target of this dislike was not the special education but the regular education in which they experienced most difficulties with teachers' (2001:151). An additional positive aspect of special placement was the small class size and the former pupils were also particularly appreciative of teachers who were able to maintain firm and fair discipline.

The young people interviewed did report negative experiences although these were not mentioned as frequently as the positives. Some (11) mentioned having been labelled, or fear of being labelled if a return to mainstream was attempted, for 9 of the young people the level of difficulty of the work was too low. Interestingly, only 3 of the 23 respondents reported feeling that they had been negatively labelled on leaving school as a result of their special education, and Jahnukainen finds no evidence of 'secondary deviance', which will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3, as a consequence of labelling.

Jahnukainen (2001) indicates that there are limitations to the methods of his study (in particular an unrepresentative sample and interviews a number of years after the event) which indicate that his findings should be treated with caution. However there are strong similarities with findings in this and other studies, in particular in relation to the importance of the teacher.

Farrell and Polat (2003) express concern that general research on the benefits of inclusion has 'tended not to focus on pupils with EBD, which raises the possibility that the [...] findings may not apply to this population' (2003: 280). Farrell and Polat interviewed 26 former pupils of one residential school for pupils with EBD, a method and sample size similar to that employed in the Finnish study. They conclude that 'the great majority were extremely satisfied with the quality of education, care and support they had received there' (2003: 287). Once again small classes and good, open and supportive relationships with teachers were key. However, the former pupils in this study had much more negative experiences on leaving school as a consequence of being labelled. They also report a lack of ongoing support once they passed compulsory school age. Their findings support those of earlier studies in the UK and USA, which have identified difficulties which former pupils of EBD special schools encounter in relation to employment, relationships and criminal activity. However these findings clearly contradict those of Jahnukainen (2001) this may, at least in part, be explained by the different cultural contexts. Could it be that Scandinavian culture, more collectivist in orientation, tends to be more accepting of former pupils of SEBD provision than English (Farrell and Polat's study was conducted in England) and North American cultures which lean towards notions of individual responsibility? Given the features of the Scottish context as described in chapter 1, a comparison of the fortunes of former SEBD pupils in England and those in Scotland might prove illuminating on this issue. However, that is something which must remain outwith the remit of this thesis.

6. *Emerging Themes*

It is clear from the above review of research in the area of separate provision for pupils with SEBD that there are a number of recurring themes, which have some resonance with the emerging themes identified in the policy review in the preceding chapter. These will be examined in more detail below, but to summarise, the issues are around the broad areas of curriculum, ethos and stigma.

First, the issue of the type of education on offer ties in with the traditional vocational/academic divide. In particular the research indicates that there is a difference of opinion as to the extent to which separate schools should deviate from a mainstream curriculum – which usually implies a move from academic to more vocational work. Second, the experience of pupils in separate schools appears to be influenced to a large extent by the ethos of the school in general, and by relationships with adults in particular. This is linked to the punishment/treatment debate: it raises the question of what kind of institutional ethos is desirable, what kind of institutional ethos actually exists, and why. Finally, and also linked to the treatment/punishment question, is the issue of labelling and stigma. How are pupils with SEBD perceived by educational professionals and society in general – and what consequences does placement in provision for ‘pupils with SEBD’ have for individuals in terms of their own sense of self and life course.

6.1 Curriculum

The most recent government guidelines on flexibility in the curriculum have been noted in chapter 1. Schools are encouraged to develop curricula which are appropriate to individual pupil needs, whilst also planning for progression and offering opportunities for certification. The term ‘alternative curriculum’ has traditionally been used to refer to learning activities, and sometimes courses, which differ from those which make up the standard core curriculum. Examples of elements of an alternative curriculum include vocational training, preparation for independent living, anger-management and outdoor activities when taken in place of the formal academic curriculum. There is clearly a high degree of overlap between

the 'flexible curriculum' and an 'alternative curriculum', and it may be that the former term will supersede the latter. However one potential difference is identifiable. In government documents it is made clear that the requirements of a flexible curriculum are that it is well planned, offers progression and is accepted as of value by a range of 'stakeholders' (HMIE 2003a). The alternative curriculum has not been defined in this way and is consequently a much looser term. As a result the emphasis may be on the 'alternative' rather than the 'curriculum', in other words it is simply something other than what mainstream pupils would be expecting to do in the course of a school week - without the requirements of planning, progression and accreditation.

There is a wide range of opinion reported in these studies as to what can be considered the most appropriate curriculum for pupils with SEBD. There are five main areas of contention:

- Notions of readiness: Do underlying difficulties need to be resolved before pupils can attend to their learning, or can education itself be therapeutic?
- Breadth: should the focus be on improving basic skills at the expense of breadth, or are all pupils entitled to a mainstream curriculum?
- Certification: should pupils be entered for mainstream exams in which they may do badly, or should they sit alternative qualifications which offer success but don't have the same currency?
- Self-esteem: an alternative curriculum which offers success, or mainstream curriculum which sends a message about how teachers view the pupil?
- Specialness: in the drive towards a mainstream curriculum will important aspects of the traditional special school be lost?

Notions of readiness

According to Grimshaw and Berridge (1994) the idea of 'Education as therapy' came to the fore as the psychologists took over from the psychiatrists as the main professional agency involved with pupils with SEBD. Previously the emphasis had

been on sorting out the emotional adjustment before any learning could take place. As has been noted above, the majority of the Pioneers paid little attention to the educational aspect of their schools, in some education was voluntary. By the time of the Schools Council project in the late 1970s there was evidence that the view that education could be part of the 'treatment' was beginning to emerge, however overall curricular issues were not held to be of great importance (Wilson and Evans 1980). By 1985, Brennan comments that 'More recently the therapeutic effects of successful learning have been recognized and the result has been a broader approach to the curriculum involving specific structured teaching' (Brennan 1985: 59). The introduction of the National Curriculum was heralded by some practitioners as a 'golden opportunity' to build an appropriate curriculum for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, although the practical problems involved were fully recognised (Lund 1990). However others were not convinced, Marchant, again writing from a background as a teacher in a special school concludes that:

...the essential, core curriculum for pupils experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties is the expression and exploration of their own feelings and emotions to facilitate greater control over their own lives, according to their own interests. The provision of a formal, academic, curriculum as represented by the national curriculum is of only secondary importance until the most severe aspects of emotional and behavioural difficulties have to some extent resolved.

Marchant 1995: 46

The conflicting findings of Cole *et al.* (1998) in relation to teachers' attitudes towards the National Curriculum confirm the view that this is an area which continues to be the subject of debate.

Breadth

The advantage of having a narrow curriculum focussing on basic skills is that pupils who may well be underachieving can make gains in these key areas. There are also practical restrictions on what can be offered, summarised by Lund (1990). These tend to be associated with the small school size and therefore smaller teaching team and lack of resources, there are also difficulties with shared curricular initiatives with mainstream schools. Avar and Upton (1992) conducted a survey on impact of the

National Curriculum on units for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and concluded that a major barrier to the teaching of core and foundation subjects is the small number of teachers in each school or unit. They found that in all units teachers were required to teach subjects for which they were not qualified or trained. My own experience is of a school for pupils with SEBD which had a science laboratory, woodwork and technical room, cookery room and PE hall. Despite all these specialist facilities, very few of the class teachers ventured out of their own rooms because of concerns about safety and the control of pupils in the specialist areas.

Although Wilson and Evans (1980) conclude that 'it is still true that a smaller range of subjects well taught has more value than an ambitious and wide-ranging programme which does not engage the interests of the pupils' (1980: 170), reports from school inspectors have expressed concern at the lack of breadth of the curriculum on offer (HMI 1990, HMIE 2003b). Some subjects seem more likely to be omitted from the curriculum than others, the secondary curriculum in Scotland was found to be lacking in music, drama and science in particular (HMI 1990). The scarcity of music and drama are interesting given the widespread use of these as therapeutic tools in other contexts (see, e.g., Heal and Wigram 1993 and Jennings 1998). Cole *et al.* (1998) note that teaching of a modern foreign language was consistently rated as both irrelevant and presenting particular difficulties in meeting National Curriculum requirements. It is interesting to note that HMI do not mention modern foreign languages at all (HMI 1990), perhaps suggesting that the inspectors felt its absence did not warrant comment.

Arguments for offering a broad curriculum generally take the form of entitlement or equity issues, or are concerned with facilitating the re-integration of pupils to mainstream schools. Brennan (1985) describes the motivation behind calls for a common core curriculum (this was pre National Curriculum) as being the same as those for comprehensive education, mixed ability teaching and mainstreaming of pupils with SEN. Peter (1992) recalls the experience of editing the document *A Curriculum for All* (NCC1989), giving guidance on how the National Curriculum

should apply to pupils with special needs and notes the questions, decisions and dilemmas faced by the authors; however she concludes that the main success of the document was to reassure teachers 'that *all* children share the right to a balanced and broadly based curriculum including the National Curriculum' (1992: 313).

Certification

The issue of curriculum and certification is an important one for separate schools who view their service within a social inclusion agenda. While such schools may not see reintegration to mainstream schools as a priority, the extent to which they equip their pupils for inclusion in wider society must be a concern. The mainstream curriculum and certification route provides young people from separate provision with the same 'currency' as their mainstream peers when applying for Further/Higher Education and employment. Indeed the lack of some basic qualifications might be a serious impediment to these options. This argument must, however, be balanced against the evidence that pupils from separate provision tend to achieve only mediocre results in public exams (McKeon 1997, cited in Cole *et al.* 1998). In addition, it may be that the alternative curriculum route offers more directly relevant employment related skills. Such a curriculum may assist in the development of social and personal skills that enable the young person to manage their adult life successfully whether in employment or not. How the young people assess the usefulness of the curriculum they are offered in terms of their future options (including possible reintegration to mainstream) will have significance for their sense of 'separateness'. This dilemma has clear resonance with current debates on the parity of vocational and academic curricula in mainstream schools.

Self-esteem

In relation to self-esteem and feelings of stigmatisation, the literature is equivocal on the impact of being taught something different or in a different context. Some feel it can have a positive impact as pupils are given the opportunity to succeed. For example, studies which have looked at the provision of an alternative curriculum in special units, or for selected groups within mainstream schools (Cullen 2000, Watts 2000), have emphasised the positive effect which such a programme can have on the

self-esteem of pupils. However studies which have focused on the experience of pupils in mainstream schools where 'streaming' or 'setting' is used have found some evidence that being placed in a lower set/stream can lead to low self-esteem and de-motivation (Harlen and Malcolm 1999).

The dilemma with regard to self-esteem seems to be that being given the opportunity to succeed, through an individualised education programme and non-standard targets, and having the opportunity to establish positive relationships with adults in informal settings, have been associated with improving self-esteem. However, at the same time, having the same curriculum as mainstream schools may send a message to children about what the adults think they are capable of and how they are viewed.

'Specialness'

Lund (1992) traces the history of curriculum provision in schools for pupils with EBD from the therapeutic community 'basic skills and therapeutic activities' approach to the challenges created by the implementation of the National curriculum in these schools. Whilst acknowledging the lack of breadth and balance in the traditional approach, Lund is concerned that positive elements, such as emphasis on individual needs, relationships and the need for pupils to experience success, should not be lost in the drive to offer the same as mainstream. This echoes Laslett's comment of 15 years earlier, that schools for maladjusted pupils needed to offer a 'different kind of educational provision' to that on offer in mainstream schools (Laslett 1977: 149). Similarly, Cooper (1993b), writing about curricular provision in a mainstream school designed to meet the needs of disaffected pupils, concludes with the warning that government policies were actively working against the ability of schools to offer the type of learning environment which is known to be most supportive of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

In addition to the five areas of debate outlined above, another important section of the literature on curriculum focuses on pupils' views. Cole *et al.* (1998) found that most of the pupils in the schools they studied considered education to be important and wanted to receive the same education as their mainstream peers. This is seen as

an attempt by the pupils to reject notions of difference, 'Deep down most pupils want to be viewed as 'normal'; this means providing the National Curriculum' (Cole *et al.* 1998: 154). However, Wise (1997) found the opposite opinion among the pupils of two EBD schools she studied. Pupils there asserted that special schools should offer something 'special' and different to the curriculum in mainstream schools. This was perhaps related to the fact that a large number of the pupils in Wise's study saw the inappropriate curriculum in mainstream schools (and their response to it) as one of the reasons for their placement in separate provision. Indeed, dissatisfaction with the mainstream curriculum is a common feature of the stories disruptive pupils tell about the causes of their behaviour (Garner 1993) and the existence of such a link is widely accepted (DES 1989, Booth 1987). It seems there may be a tension here with pupils in separate provision wanting to have the same curriculum as in mainstream in order to feel 'normal', whilst at the same time rejecting the appropriateness of that curriculum.

6.2 School ethos

As has been noted above, the term 'school ethos' emerged out of research into school effects. Rutter *et al.* (1979) used the term to describe the combined effect of individual school factors, which taken together constituted a set of values, attitudes and behaviours which were characteristic of a school. However, interest in this aspect of school life pre-dates the school effects research movement, drawing on the field of organisational climate research and using the terminology of 'school climate' (Anderson 1982), and this designation continues to be used in the US (e.g., Wade and Stafford 2003, McEvoy and Welker 2000).

Whether the preferred term is 'ethos' or 'climate', the problems with definition and measurement are similar. An early attempt at clarification is offered by Halpin and Croft (1963) who suggest that the climate of a school is analogous to the personality of an individual: of course, personality is another concept which is in common usage but is difficult to define. Anderson (1982) writes, 'The field of climate research in many ways is reminiscent of the seven blind men who gave seven different

descriptions of the elephant based on the one part each could touch, and who each claimed to possess the definitive image of an elephant’ (1982: 376). In a similar vein, Donnelly (1999) describes ethos as a ‘fashionable but nebulous term’ (1999: 134), and goes on to point out the negative implications of a lack of clear definition for empirical research in the area. Moss (1989), having reviewed the literature in the area, concluded that there are 3 dimensions to ethos – social, moral and cognitive - reflecting relationships, values and learning environment respectively with different models giving varying levels of importance to each. These three dimensions can be seen in the ethos ‘quality indicators’ provided in the Scottish school self-evaluation guide *How Good Is Our School?* (HMIE 2002b) as shown in Table 2.1.

Dimension	Ethos indicator
<i>Social</i>	5.1 Climate and relationships. 5.4 Partnership with parents, the School Board and the community.
<i>Moral</i>	5.3 Equality and fairness.
<i>Cognitive</i>	5.2 Expectations and promoting achievement.

Table 2.1 Dimensions of ethos related to HGIOS indicators

In the field of SEBD research there has been longstanding interest in what we have come to know as ‘ethos’. In particular the social dimension has been found to be highly significant. All the research evidence reviewed above suggests that relationships between pupils and teachers are key determinants of how positively pupils feel about their placement in SEBD provision, and of how ‘effective’ that provision is.

Millham *et al.* (1975) conducted a study of the different regimes in 18 approved schools for boys. In his foreward to Millham *et al.* (1975), Balbernie identifies the key finding of the study as being the connection between schools allowing and

fostering 'substantial' pupil/staff relationships and effectiveness. However, it could be argued that an even more significant finding was that those regimes which in theory were focussed on developing good pupil/staff relationships - the therapeutic communities - were actually, in Millham *et al.*'s assessment, the least effective. Thus, whilst it is good staff-pupil relationships which make the difference, there is something else needed to explain in what circumstances these positive, indeed transforming, relationships will be possible. Millham *et al.* (1975) found that the schools in their study differed according to the method of control employed; four models of control were in evidence, with each school drawing on one or more:

- Control through relevant goals (if pupils accept the goals of the institution they tend to accept the authority of the institution)
- Control through relationships (misbehaviour is a violation of friendship) – typically found in therapeutic communities
- Control through rewards and sanctions
- Pupil participation in control process

Millham *et al.* (1975) also measured effectiveness on pastoral care by collecting data on the number of boys who took problems (and what kind of problems) to a member of staff rather than, e.g. other boys. They found that many schools with firm discipline, those which could be categorised as drawing from the punishment rather than welfare model, had more effective pastoral care than those operating a therapeutic community model. Millham *et al.* (1975) concluded that regimes based simply on control by relationships were exhausting for staff who were often lacking in expertise, and relied on an acceptance by the young person that they needed to change. Some advantages were noted, therapeutic communities were often good at involving pupils and pupils were seen as individuals, however overall they were very ineffective. Much more effective were those schools which had clear goals which emphasised the needs of the individual over the institution, and which were agreed and shared by staff who felt able to influence decisions.

This combination of firm discipline, relationships based on trust, and an emphasis on the individual is evident in the notion of ‘rubber boundaries’ discussed by Cole *et al.* (1998). This term relates to systems in schools which have a high degree of structure but are flexible within that. Such systems allow pupils to feel secure and establish relationships of trust, and as Millham *et al* concluded, ‘pastoral care relies on mutual trust, a scarce commodity in any institution’ (1975: 124).

It would appear then that, in addition to relationships, the regime of an institution especially the method of control will be highly significant in determining the ethos of a school for pupils with SEBD.

In conclusion, those aspects of school ethos which appear, from the review of the literature, to be of particular importance to SEBD provision are shown in Table 2.2, alongside the relevant ethos indicator themes from *How Good Is Our School* (HMIE 2002b).

HGIOS indicator	HGIOS theme	Theme from literature on SEBD
<i>5.1 Climate and relationships</i>	Sense of identity and pride in the school.	Pupils identify with institutional goals. Staff identify with institutional goals.
	Pupil and staff morale.	Staff feel effective and involved in decision-making.
	Pupil/staff relationships.	Relationships characterised by trust.
	Pupils’ behaviour and discipline.	Model of control used.

Table 2.2 Aspects of school ethos of particular importance to SEBD schools

6.3 Stigma

Theoretical perspectives on stigma, labelling and secondary deviance will be addressed in chapter 3. In this section the issues emerging from the review of the literature will be considered.

There is a limited amount of research conducted with current pupils of schools for pupils with SEBD which talks to their experience of stigmatisation (Cooper 1993a, Sinclair Taylor 1995 and Elder 1966). However there is other relevant research: studies which have examined the experiences of pupils with other special educational needs (e.g., Padeliadou 1995, Norwich 1997, Norwich and Kelly 2004) and research which has sought the views of former pupils of SEBD provision (Howe 1995, Wearmouth 1999, Jahnuakainen 2001, Farrell and Polat 2003).

There is a prevalent assumption in policy debates around inclusion and integration that separate educational provision is stigmatizing (Norwich 1997). The limited research in this area provides no clear evidence of this effect, however it does serve to illuminate the complexity of the topic. There are four closely related issues on the question of stigmatisation identifiable in the literature:

- what happens at school versus after school
- where pupils say they prefer to be placed
- pupils' knowledge of the views of others, versus their view of themselves
- the reputation of the unit/school.

Studies suggest that while in special schools or units pupils may not be aware of, or are able to reject negative labelling and associations (Norwich 1997), however on leaving school they find that their educational history closes doors to them (Howe 1995). This view is countered by some of the head teachers interviewed by Croll and Moses (2000) who believed that a separate education was the best chance pupils with EBD had of being prepared to take up their place in an inclusive society.

Wearmouth (1999) gives an account of the experiences of 'maladjusted Jack', whose life chances were damaged as a result of his label. Wearmouth argues that it was not

Jack's special school placement *per se* which had such negative consequences, but the assumptions which professionals made about him as a result of that placement.

Sinclair Taylor (1995) reports that the pupils she interviewed tend not to express the desire to cross between mainstream and special in either direction, she also identifies a feeling of loyalty to the special unit among pupils, which is fostered by staff.

Cooper (1995) found 'the overwhelming majority of pupils in both schools [...] claimed to prefer their current placement to other placements they had experienced' (1995: 100). Similarly, Allan and Brown (2001) found that pupils in their study were 'highly positive' about their special school experience. These findings must be interpreted in the light of Lewis's (1995) finding that wherever they are placed, pupils tend to express a preference for their current placement.

Norwich (1997) asked pupils both what they thought, and what they thought others might think about separate education, the 'assumption behind this method was that by eliciting others' perspectives, it is possible to compare their own views with the perceptions of others' views and thus make it possible to explore their own views more fully' (1997: 41). Whilst the pupils in this study tended to have positive things to say about special schools, they thought that other pupils in special schools and mainstream pupils might have more negative views. Norwich concludes, 'it is [...] clear from the findings that pupils' recognition of their stigmatized social identity does not translate simply into negative self-perceptions' (1997: 50). This matches findings from Sinclair Taylor's study (1995) in which special unit pupils were well aware of the negative views mainstream pupils had of them; their response to this seems to have been to identify even more strongly with the unit, in particular the unit staff. These studies articulate with the work of Cooper (1993a, 1995) and his notion of 're-signification'. In chapter 3 the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism will be used to offer a possible explanation of these findings.

In a much earlier study, Elder (1966) investigated the relationship between students' acceptance of their 'continuation school' and both the public reputation of that school and how useful the students believed the education received there would be in

obtaining a job. He concluded that for those students who could be expected to find employment on leaving school, if the school provided a relevant vocational education they tended to be accepting of it. However for a large group of students, those less likely to find employment (in particular girls and non-whites) 'recognition of the school's public image as a "school for delinquents" was highly disturbing because it severely impaired their effectiveness in teaching the students' (Elder 1966: 329). In other words, those students who could see a purpose and potential benefit of their placement were more able to reject or ignore the reputation of the school.

Stigma in relation to separate educational placement appears to operate at a number of different levels: pupils can carry a stigma in the eyes of others and not be aware of it; be aware of it and reject it, or be aware of it and internalise the negative descriptions. What determines which of these levels happens in practice seems to be connected to the student's acceptance of and identification with the special school placement which in itself may be related to the curriculum on offer. It is of course also likely that individual differences will be influential in this regard. Indeed there is a growing body of literature on 'resilience' factors, characteristics of the individual, family or wider community which serve to protect an individual. Typically concern has been with factors which protect young people from experiencing mental health problems (Street 2005), but more recently 'resilience' has become more widely used (e.g., Daniel and Wassell 2002, Luthar 2003, Ungar 2004). Whilst this body of literature potentially offers an interesting perspective from which to analyse the experiences of pupils in separate provision it will not be used in this research, which will instead use the perspective of symbolic interactionism to interrogate the data generated.

7. This research

The importance of studying provision for pupils with SEBD has been well rehearsed by the authors of above projects. Lack of existing research, rising concern with indiscipline in the mainstream, the dominance of the inclusion agenda asserting that

mainstream is always best, the potential to learn from expertise in separate provision, and the need to redress the imbalance of the bad press given to residential schools have all been cited as reasons for research in this area (Cooper 1995, Cole *et al.* 1998). While the studies outlined above have gone some way to address the issue of lack of relevant research, I would argue that there are limitations in the research carried out to date (in terms of context, focus and research design) and new questions which have arisen from it, these will now be discussed.

Significantly, there is currently no central register of schools which meet the needs of pupils who are assessed as having SEBD in Scotland. Consequently there is no 'big picture' available and no overall record of numbers or profiles of pupils in such schools. The first task then of this study is to generate a map of separate provision in Scotland for pupils with SEBD. As noted above, neither of the large 'national surveys' included schools in Scotland, and although HMI (1990) was exclusively based in Scotland very little smaller-scale research, has been carried out into SEBD provision here. In chapter one I suggested ways in which the Scottish context influences the response to pupils identified as having SEBD, this particular context makes questions about curriculum (academic versus vocational) and approach (punishment versus welfare) highly relevant.

In some of the studies reviewed in this chapter (Jahnukainen 2001, Farrell and Polat 2003, Howe 1995) former pupils of SEBD provision have been asked, retrospectively, to reflect upon their experiences. In others the opinions of current pupils has either not been the main area of focus, or has not been researched at all (Cole *et al.* 1998, Wilson and Evans 1980, Grimshaw and Berridge 1994, HMI 1990). These studies support the view of Alderson (1999) who observes, 'Research about EBD mainly measures incidence through psychological tests and teachers' and parents' estimation ...[there has been] little of the alternative 'micro-level' research about young people's own perspectives' (1999: 54). Increasing importance has been attached to listening to the voices of young people, particularly those at increased risk of marginalization over the last 10 years (e.g., Morrow and Richards 1996, Lloyd-Smith and Tarr 2000, Riley and Docking 2004). While there are some studies

which have made listening to young people in SEBD provision their main focus (in particular Cooper 1993a), these continue to be the exception. In studies where pupil voice has been the main focus, it tends to be in the context of a practitioner researching their own institution. This research will be different in that it will investigate the Scottish case, it will prioritise the views of young people and it will be conducted by a researcher with substantial experience as a practitioner in this type of provision, but with no recent direct contact with the selected schools.

This research has two main purposes; the first is to generate a map of separate provision for pupils with SEBD in Scotland. As will be discussed in chapter four, a postal survey was felt to be the most appropriate method for this first study. The second purpose of the research is to explore the three themes of curriculum, ethos and stigma through interviews with pupils in separate provision. This second study investigates the possibility of a connection between curriculum and the ethos of the school, in particular pupil/staff relationships. Although there is some debate as to the 'correct' use of the term 'case study', as discussed in chapter six, this second study can perhaps best be described as a 'case within a case'.

Given the importance of ethos, in relation to effectiveness (both in terms of what Millham *et al.* (1975) called pastoral care, but also in school outcome factors more usually associated with the effective schools research); it will be important to establish what other school factors have an impact on ethos. In particular, in this research the possibility that the type of curriculum on offer will affect the ethos of the school will be investigated. There are three reasons for supposing that ethos and curriculum are connected. First, as was discussed above, the type of curriculum on offer can send a message to pupils about how they are viewed by the staff. Second, a culture of high expectations and its positive correlation with positive school ethos may be more difficult to establish in a school which does not offer standard certificated courses. Third, the organisation of the learning environment associated with the delivery of a traditional curriculum may not offer the same opportunities for the establishment of close relationships between teachers and pupils as the learning environment for an alternative curriculum. In addition to the issue of curriculum

content, aspects of curriculum delivery, e.g., class size, individual versus group work, and level of difficulty, will be investigated with a view to gaining an impression of the educational experience of pupils.

The tension in the literature between studies which suggest separate provision is stigmatising and those which suggest it offers an opportunity for re-signification will be addressed by exploring whether pupils in separate provision feel stigmatised and how this varies with curriculum and ethos.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the literature in relation to separate provision for pupils with SEBD, emerging themes have been discussed and in the final section the ways in which this research differs from earlier work were noted. In the following chapter attention will turn to the theoretical perspectives which have informed the design of this study.

Chapter 3

Introduction

This chapter has a number of purposes all concerned with setting out the particular theoretical approach taken in this thesis. In the first section it will be important to say something about the general approach to theory adopted in this study and about the underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions being made, an important part of which will be to outline my perspective on the question of structure /agency. In this first section I will align myself with the critical realists; this is not to be taken as evidence that I am firmly locating myself within this school of thought. Rather, and more simply, in terms of conceptualising the relationship between structure and agency I find the model they offer a useful one. In section two I will consider the socially constructed nature of childhood and how this relates to conceptualisations of young people 'in trouble', before going on to explore the theoretical approaches commonly found in studies in the area of SEBD, and more widely in the field of Special Education in section three. This section will examine theories that address different units of analysis: the social world and individual interactions. The potential usefulness of particular theoretical approaches will be assessed in terms of their ability to both ask interesting questions of, and provide convincing explanations for the data generated in this thesis. It will be argued that symbolic interactionism will be the most useful theoretical perspective from which to analyse the data from the second study, which explores pupils' experience of separate provision.

1. Theoretical Approach

Garland (1990) writing about the sociology of punishment asserts that, 'Theories are conceptual means of interpreting and explicating information. They come into

competition only when they offer alternative and incompatible explanations for the same data' (1990: 13). Munn (1993) uses the term 'theoretical lenses' to illustrate how different theories allow the researcher to view data from alternative perspectives and thus offer distinct explanations for the same social event. This thesis will adopt the same position in regard to the use of theory as an interrogative and explanatory tool. Thus there will be no search for a 'grand narrative' of SEBD, rather an attempt to use theory to provide possible interpretations of aspects of both provision for pupils with SEBD and of the experience of being educated in SEBD provision.

The use of and fashions in theory in educational research to a large extent mirror patterns within the broader field of the social sciences. In the particular field of special education the 1970s marked a watershed in ways of thinking, with a large-scale (though not complete) shift away from what has been described as the 'psychomedical paradigm' (Clark, Dyson and Millward 1998). Since that time, educational research has increasingly tended towards more interpretivist ways of thinking, with the importance of the experience of the individual emphasised (Macleod and Munn 2004); although within special education in particular, the psycho-medical paradigm never completely went away, and is enjoying something of a resurgence (Lloyd 2003).

The increasing interest in the individual and the local gave rise in the 1980's to a concern with the relationship between theories which operate at different levels of analysis, this was described as the 'micro-macro problem' (Hargreaves, A. 1986, Hargreaves, D. 1986, Hammersley 1986). The possibility of synthesising research at both the system and the local (school or individual) level into one theoretical perspective was seen by some as an important goal of educational research, but by others as a fruitless search (Hammersley 1986). Of course the macro-micro 'problem' has similarities with (although is not the same as, Ritzer 2000) attempts to reconcile structure and agency which were happening at the same time within sociology; and as Hay has noted 'different positions with respect to structure and agency reflect different epistemologies and ontologies' (1995: 192).

It could be argued that when looking at the experience of pupils who have acquired the label SEBD the assumptions being made about the social world become highly significant. As Lloyd and O'Regan (2000), in their work with young women identified as deviant observe, polarised views on the question of structure/agency will lead to these women being viewed either as 'simply victims of structural inequalities or as feckless creators of their own irresponsible circumstances' (Lloyd and O'Regan 2000:49). If such simplistic analyses are to be avoided, then basic premises of the thesis must be clarified.

Before embarking on such a clarification, it should be noted that this thesis is an empirical rather than theoretical one, and is in the discipline of education not philosophy or sociology. As such the major theoretical project is one of identifying the most appropriate theories to use to interrogate new data, and consequently only a basic summary of the underlying assumptions will be provided.

Two opposing philosophical positions are seen as underpinning much of the conflict in educational research (Pring 2000), which as was noted in chapter 2 has recently been reopened with the advent of the 'what works?' research agenda. On the one side are the realists who assert the existence of an objective world existing independently of our knowledge of it. In contrast the relativist camp assert that the world is a social construction, there is nothing 'out there' to be discovered. However, much of the recent writing on this polarisation of views is aimed at, if not reconciling, at least narrowing the gap between, them. One attempt to do so is offered by Pring: 'It is not that there are multiple realities. Rather there are different ways in which reality is conceived, and those differences may well reflect different practical interests and different traditions' (Pring 2000: 254). Griffiths (1998) draws on both 'Enlightenment' and 'postmodern' ideas in an attempt at developing a new theoretical framework for thinking about the possibility of social justice in schools. Other attempts employ the tactic of asserting that their position has been misunderstood. A common theme in the literature from the

‘realist’ position is that the critique offered by the relativists is of a ‘strawman’ (Moore and Muller 1999), either adopting a view of scientific method which would be unrecognisable to most scientists, or by equating realism with ‘naïve realism’ (Pring 2000, Collier 1994). Similarly, Laws and Davies (2000) comment that a ‘startling mode of dismissal’ (2000:206) of the post-modernist view rests in the assertion that for post-modernists there can be no common narratives – an assertion they clearly reject.

The differences between realism and relativism can perhaps be better understood when their respective ‘starting points’ are considered. Realists start from an ontological assertion that the material world exists. On the basis of that ontology they build an epistemology in which two key assertions are as follows: first, knowledge can be objective (the things we know exist whether we know them or not); and second, knowledge claims are fallible (it will always be possible that further information will arise which improves our knowledge) (Collier 1994). In contrast, the relativist position starts from theorising about what we can know – that is, epistemology. Within this approach knowledge is viewed as a social construction, with individuals constructing their own knowledge, thus the question of what there really is ‘out there’ becomes redundant. The approach taken in this thesis is more akin to the realist position – there is a real world that we can know. However, that is not to deny, as with Pring (2000) quoted above, that individuals will make sense of the real world in different ways.

The attempts at narrowing the realist/relativist divide are mirrored by the numerous attempts within social and political theory to ‘transcend the dualism of structure and agency’ (Hay 1995: 197). Perhaps the best known of these is Giddens’ theory of structuration, which stresses ‘the mutual dependence of structure and agency’ (Giddens 1979: 69). While being acknowledged as an important and ambitious contribution to the debate, Giddens’ work has attracted a degree of criticism (Smart 1982, Craib 1992, Ritzer 2000, Hay 1995); in particular it is suggested that the problem of dualism between structure and agency has been ‘defined away’ and replaced with a dualism between system and agency (Hay 1995).

An alternative attempt at narrowing the gap between structure and agency is found in the work of the critical realists. One of the key differences between structuration theory and critical realism appears to lie in the meaning of 'social structure' within each. Porpora (1998) highlights the criticism of Giddens noted above - that he transcends structure/agency dualism by redefining structure as 'rules and resources'. This, argues Porpora (1998), presents a view of structure as cultural (an 'intersubjective reality'), similarly Ritzer (2000) notes the care Giddens takes to clarify that he does not consider structure to be external to human action. In contrast, Porpora (1998) favours the view which sees social structure 'as systems of human relations among social positions' (1998: 343). As Porpora (1998) notes, although this view of structure is most commonly associated with the Marxist tradition, in which 'systems' are the modes of production and 'social positions' are understood as class position, other interpretations of systems and social positions are possible. The fundamental problem with structuration theory for Porpora, and others (Archer 1998) is that it does not take account of *relationships* between different social positions, and that these relationships are prior to the rule-following behaviour which Giddens calls structure.

Hay (1995) characterises structuration theory as an 'insider account' that is, one which is agency centred; Smart (1982) suggests that Giddens was primarily concerned with developing a theory of action in the context of sociology which he considered was leaning towards determinism; and Ritzer (2000) asserts that 'Giddens has a more powerful sense of agency than do most other theorists of this genre' (2000: 548). In contrast, the school of critical realism represents a more structure-centred approach (Hay 1995).

That critical realism can be viewed as leaning more towards structure than agency does not imply that it is deterministic. Bhaskar, commonly held to be the founding father of critical realism (Collier 1994, Hay 1995), proposes the following model of the relationship between individuals and the social:

...people do not create society. For it always pre-exists them and is a necessary condition for their activity. Rather, society must be regarded as an ensemble of structures, practices and conventions which individuals reproduce or transform, but which would not exist unless they did so. Society does not exist independently of human agency...But it is not the product of it.

Bhaskar 1998: 216

For Bhaskar and later critical realists, it is because people 'have beliefs, interests, goals, and practical knowledge acquired in their epigenesis as members of society that they do what they do and thus sustain (transform) the structures' (Manicas 1998: 320).

Individuals are, then, intentional actors. While it is important for Bhaskar (1998) to assert the theoretical possibility of individuals acting deliberately to sustain or change social structure, the common view is that the impact of individual action on social structure is generally unintended (Manicas 1998, Sayer 1992). However for Hay (1995), the reflexive nature of individuals which enables them to monitor the effects of their behaviour, is crucial. It provides the potential for 'strategic learning' – that is the possibility that an actor might alter their behaviour in future to gain a more successful outcome. Perhaps this emphasis on the possibility of strategic learning reflects the particular interests of Hay as a political scientist.

Although critical realism appears to have made little obvious impact on theory and research within education, with a small number of exceptions (e.g., Warner 1993, House 1991), it has a number of things to offer. First, and most significantly in relation to this thesis, it offers a model of structure and agency which avoids both extreme determinism and individualism. Second, and following Hay's (1995) interest in strategic learning, it provides a basis for social transformation as it is motivated by an 'emancipatory interest'; the discovery through enquiry of previously concealed structures provides the possibility of these structures being changed by individuals or groups (Warner 1993). Finally, unlike other approaches which may view constraining structures as simply constructions or discourses, Bhaskar's realism retains the material basis of social practices: 'Social practices [...] always have a material dimension. This is an important consideration, as reflection on the prevalence and impact of the phenomena of hunger,

homelessness and war on so much of human history shows' (Bhaskar 1989: 4, cited in Warner 1993: 322).

It should be noted that this thesis does not, however, represent an attempt to provide a critical realist account of SEBD, although that is indeed a project worthy of attention in a more theoretical study, rather it adopts a view of the relationship between structure and agency commonly found in critical realism.

2. Social construction of childhood

Before looking at different ways of conceptualising young people with SEBD it is important to first examine the more fundamental issue of how children in general are conceptualised. The study of childhood is an area full of paradox, as Jenks makes clear, 'the child is familiar to us and yet strange, he or she inhabits our world and yet seems to answer to another, he or she is essentially of ourselves and yet appears to display a systematically different order of being' (Jenks 1996:3). The notion that childhood is a social construct, reified through institutions and customs, is relatively recent and is a key feature of an emerging new paradigm in the sociology of childhood (Prout and James 1997). It is only in the last decade or so that 'commonsense notions of childhood' (Jenks 1992) have been critically examined and the experience of being a child has been separated from the experience of being a proto-adult.

The origins of the new sociology of childhood can perhaps be traced back to the work of Aries (1992), who examined the history of childhood from the perspective of how children have been depicted in art, noting that up until the 16th century on the rare occasions they did appear they were simply shown as small adults. From this, and later developments in art, he concluded that childhood was not a universal phenomenon but is historically, socially and culturally specific. Once the idea of childhood as a social construction was accepted, it became possible for social scientists (e.g., Hendrick 1997),

to chart the history of constructions and reconstructions.

What emerges from Hendrick's (1997) analysis is that these reconstructions do not emerge by chance, rather the determining factors at each stage can be seen as essentially economic and political. At the end of the 18th century children began to 'take jobs away' from adult men and started to be viewed as in need of 'nurturing' rather than as 'workers'; in the middle of the 19th century the education of working class children was seen as a way to control them; and later still in the 20th century children came to be seen as the future of the nation and therefore in need of protection.

The issue of how a society controls its children is a central theme in Jenks' work (Jenks 1996). He describes two models of childhood which, he contests, influence modern discourses of childhood and can be seen as reflecting different social structures and methods of control. The 'Dionysian' child by nature has the potential for evil, is selfish and corruptible and thus must be tightly controlled by adults in order for the child's will to be broken and their successful socialisation into the adult world to be achieved. In contrast the 'Apollonian' child is innocent, even angelic and should be nurtured and fostered in order to bring out their unique potential. Unlike the Dionysian child, the Apollonian is not subject to external constraints and punishments. Rather, as described by Foucault, the control of the individual is now internal; children (like adults) are controlled through more subtle means. Children are now highly visible as they are observed by a range of interested parties, there are ever more ways of being, and consequently not being, normal. The social structure to which the Apollonian child belongs is characterised by fragmentation and plurality, where shared values are replaced by the celebration of the individual. Consequently the control of the individual becomes a private matter. Jenks concludes that it is the image of the Apollonian child, which dominates modern western societies. In contrast, Hendrick (1997) argues that different versions of childhood have co-existed for centuries, noting the conflict between the Rousseauesque essentially 'good and innocent' child and Wesley's wild 'savages'; this polarity is said to persist to the present day (Lambert 1996). This co-existence of

competing conceptualisations can also be seen in the continuing tension between welfare and punishment approaches to young people in trouble as was discussed in chapter 1.

But how do these contrasting views of childhood account for what happens when things ‘go wrong’? As was noted above, the Dionysian child is thought to be in need of external control and punishment. For Jenks’s (1996) Apollonian child, the family is the locus of control; it is therefore the family that is responsible for the nurture, fostering and socialisation of the child. When a failure in this process is deemed to have occurred it is the family that will be held responsible. As the unit of social control, the family can be seen as the interface between government and individual.

McLaughlin and Muncie (1993) discuss the role of the family in the history of juvenile delinquency (in a broader sense than simply offending behaviour) and justice. At the heart of this issue is a paradox, the family has at times been seen as responsible for delinquent behaviour but at other times is seen as the best place for such behaviour to be controlled. In the immediate post-war period, which saw the birth of the welfare state, the dominant construction of childhood was heavily influenced by the recent war experience (Hendrick 1997). In particular the evacuees from the inner cities provided subject matter for the psychologists and psychiatrists concerned with attachment theory. The importance of family relationships was emphasised, and delinquency was seen as a result of difficulties within families ‘who had been “left behind” in the advancement of post-war prosperity and meritocracy’ (McLaughlin and Muncie 1993:161). A new model of response emerged which sought to ‘treat’ families rather than to punish individual children. In Scotland this was reflected in the Kilbrandon Report and subsequent legislation. This period coincides with what Jenks (1996) describes as the age of ‘futuraity’. During this time childhood was seen as the promise of the future, the Enlightenment idea of progress towards a rational society and things always getting better from one generation to the next had not yet been replaced with uncertainty. Children were therefore in need of guidance and support and education to prepare them for their future adult life.

However, the extent to which the 'welfare' discourse of childhood actually dominated is questioned by McLaughlin and Muncie (1993) who note that the criminal justice personnel had never really given up their own ideas about the best way to deal with delinquency. And with the election of the Conservative government in 1979 the focus returned to the individual's responsibility for their own criminal behaviour. This change in emphasis can be seen as characteristic of the emerging philosophy of the New Right, with its accent on individual responsibility and the maintenance of law and order. The welfare state was seen as having created dependency on the state and therefore undermined the family. The solution was to force parents to take responsibility for their children (McLaughlin and Muncie 1993). This approach has not altered with the election of the Labour Government in 1997, as the introduction of Parenting Orders in England and Wales indicates. In addition to putting responsibility back onto families, the current political 'obsession' with youth offending makes it more likely that young people in trouble are identified as 'troublesome' rather than as 'in need' (O'Neill 2005).

More recently the tendency to medicalise young people experiencing difficulties (Lloyd 2003) has offered a third possibility: they can be seen as essentially good, victims of circumstance, and needing support to get back on track; deliberately bad and in need of punishment; or ill and requiring treatment. The implications of this increasing medicalisation for individual accountability for behaviour is discussed by Tait (2003) who notes the trend, particularly in the US, for a medical label to be used in mitigation for disruptive behaviour.

In conclusion, it has been suggested that there are a range of ways of conceptualising children and childhood available. One way in which these differ is according to how they view the process of socialisation into the accepted norms of society, and who is said to be responsible for this. It has also been argued that whichever conceptualisation is in ascendancy at any time is not a matter of chance but is closely related to the specific

economic and political context. These competing and contradictory ways of thinking about children have found expression in changing policy towards young people in trouble.

3. Approaches to theorising SEBD

In *Theorising Special Education* Clark, Dyson and Millward (1998) express concern at the state of theorising in special education. The end of the dominance of the positivist paradigm and its preoccupation with seeking the objective truth about the deficits of some individuals and how the education system should rationally respond, has given way to a new paradigm. They label this the post-positivist paradigm, and it is said to embrace a wide range of approaches. Despite the diversity, Clark *et al.* assert that theorising in the new paradigm is less diverse than it might at first appear, and that there are a number of common features across approaches. First, special needs are seen as socially produced, either through discourse, institutions or structural forces, and not as characteristics of individuals. Second, as special needs are no longer admitted as real characteristics of individuals, then the special education system cannot be viewed as a rational response to these needs. It follows that if the system is not responding to the needs of individual children it is probably meeting the needs of another group. This is variously thought to be professionals, mainstream educators or parents. Finally, Clark *et al.* argue that post-positivist theorising takes a political and ethical stance. It is underpinned by liberal values, particularly a commitment to equity and inclusion, and sees the old paradigm as oppressive or discriminatory.

Much of this 'post-positivist' theorising, particularly in relation to pupils with SEBD, can be seen as having its intellectual roots much further back, in the work of classic social theorists such as Durkheim and Marx, or more recently in the work of post-modernists and post-structuralists, particularly Foucault. Such roots of theorising on SEBD are easy to trace, originating as they do in varying accounts of how society creates deviants. Given the pervasiveness and often implicit use of these theories it will

be useful to provide a brief summary of approaches associated with the Durkheimian and Marxist traditions. The intention is not to provide a comprehensive overview of social theory but to illustrate how some classic social theory relates to more recent theorizing about deviance. Such an account is designed to serve as context, there is no attempt made in this thesis to provide an explanation of how 'deviants' are socially produced in contemporary Scotland. The 'mapping' exercise, which comprises the first study, reported in chapters 4 and 5 is a descriptive project, and while it is of interest to note the extent to which the data supports, or otherwise, varying explanations -this will be as an 'aside'. It is also for this reason that the large body of literature generally referred to as 'sociology of deviance' is not considered central to this thesis.

Following the summary of the application of Marx and Durkheim to special education, post-modernism and in particular the work of Foucault will be examined in greater depth. This relatively detailed examination is required not because this is the approach that will be taken in this thesis, rather it will be necessary to indicate why such an approach is considered inadequate for analysis of pupils' experiences of being educated in separate provision, which comprises the second study. I will conclude that while Foucault has much to offer some areas of educational research in terms of this thesis the theoretical perspective offered by symbolic interactionism is more illuminating.

3.1 Durkheim and Marx

The work of Durkheim permeates much of what is written in modern sociology on the subject of deviance (Craib 1997). Durkheim argues that what makes an act criminal is nothing to do with the nature of the act itself but is the fact that it may be punished. Crime is a healthy part of society as it helps reinforce boundaries by pointing out when they have been crossed. Durkheim not only said that a society without crime could not exist, but also that crime is a valuable motivator of social change as it challenges the boundaries which it is seen to have transgressed (Craib 1997). It thus serves to move a society forward when the views of those contravening the laws are gradually assimilated

back in to the mainstream. Deviant behaviour is not, then an objective fact, it is whatever a particular group at a particular time choose to label as deviant, and children labelled as deviant by the school system can be seen as 'cultural critics' of that system.

Hargreaves (1979) points out that people working in the area of education have largely ignored the implications of this. They operate in the belief that deviance can be eradicated, at least in principle, and devote their time and energy to trying to find out how this can be done. Perhaps it is more helpful to think of the children who are labelled as deviant by the education system as being a force for social change? It may be that by considering their alienation from the education system we start to question the appropriateness of the system for all our children. Indeed there is evidence to support this claim, Munn *et al.* (2000) describe features of the ethos of an inclusive school which make it more possible for challenging children to remain within the mainstream. Is this an example of the 'deviants' challenging the established order and promoting progress?

Ford, Mongon and Whelan's *Special Education and Social Control* (1982) adopts what is often described as a neo-marxist analysis of special education (e.g., Copeland 1993). The basic argument is that special educational provision has developed and expanded in response to the need to control a deviant section of the population who get in the way of the real work of schools which is producing a labour-force. This control is generally effected through the attachment of medical diagnoses to the individual children. Thus the problem is clearly defined as lying within the child and not the system.

A central belief in Marxist views of education is that appearances are deceptive; schools can appear to offer equality of opportunity to all, every child has access to the same curriculum and advancement will be on the basis of ability and nothing else. However this hides what is really going on. Bourdieu (1997) argues that education in fact preserves the social, economic and educational advantage of the elite. Without an amount of social and cultural capital already existing in the family, a child will not be able to access the education on offer. Alienated children then form their own (anti-

school) subcultures that serve to exclude them further.

3.2 Post-modernism and Foucault

Perhaps the most influential theoretical perspective on current writing in the field of special education, and SEBD in particular is post-modernism. The introduction to a special edition of the *British Educational Research Journal* in 1996 announced: 'Post-modernism and post-structuralism have finally hit education, though they have been used by the social sciences for a decade or more' (Paechter and Weiner 1996:267). The interest in using these perspectives appears not to have waned any, particularly in the field of special education (e.g. Allan 1999, Mayo 2000, Laws and Davies 2000, Raby 2002, Waterhouse 2004).

The origins of post-modernism are frequently located in cultural changes, particularly in architecture, in the 1950s and 60s, in the writings of French post-structuralists and in theories of contemporary society (e.g. Cole and Hill 1995; Agger 1997; Green 1994). As its name suggests, post-modernism is a rejection of modernism, the enlightenment project and, 'indeed any integrated or coherent thought system which attempts to find an overall pattern in social structures or historical development' (Green 1994: 72).

There are a number of major theorists associated with this tradition, in particular Derrida, Baudrillard, Deleuze and Foucault (Danaher, Schirato and Webb 2000), although as Stronach (1996) makes clear any attempts to map out the membership of a post-modern school is fraught with difficulty. Within educational research it would appear that of all those who might become attached to the post-modernist label, Foucault has been the most influential. Paechter and Weiner (1996) comment that 'post-modern and post-structuralist ideas...can be seen as beneficial and potentially liberating in a number of ways; in particular with reference to Foucault's work on discourse, power and knowledge' (Paechter and Weiner 1996: 268). It is because of the widespread use of Foucault's ideas in education that a more detailed account of his work will be given.

The purpose of this section will be not only to summarise how Foucauldian theory (if there is indeed a cohesive whole which can be so labelled) has been applied, but also to indicate difficulties with it which have led to it being rejected as a theoretical base for this study.

Foucault resisted attempts to categorise his thinking (Gutting 1994) although he is increasingly referred to as a post-modernist (Stronach 1996, Agger 1997), at the end of his life he was eager to situate his work in the Enlightenment tradition (Ingram 1994). His work is associated with post-modernism because of his view that knowledge is socially created through the exercise of domination (McCarthy 1990).

Foucault wrote 'it is not power, but the subject, which is the general theme of my research' (1983:209), but as he shows, they are two sides of the same thing. For him, power did not reside simply in the hierarchical (and vertical) structure of society; it is more insidious (and horizontal). Humans are made into subjects through the sciences treating them as objects to study. Science also divides people – psychiatry defines the sane and insane – and throughout history new ways of being deviant are constantly uncovered and legitimised through scientific 'discovery'.

The difficulty in identifying 'what Foucault really said' has led to his work being used in a variety of different ways. Mayo (2000) observes that 'the uses of Foucault in education are most often at the extreme poles of his work and indeed push his ideas past his full intentions' (Mayo 2000: 104). Mayo suggests that at one extreme Foucault is interpreted as talking about power simply in repressive terms, while at the other his work is used to examine the notion of subjectivity. It would appear that over time it is this, Foucault's concern (expressed in his later work) with 'care of the self' that is being seen as his key idea (Wain 1996). Certainly within the field of special education Foucault's work is most often used to 'rescue' the agency of pupils who attract the 'special needs' label by identifying their resistance, transgression, and opportunities to find other sources of subjectivity (e.g., Laws and Davies 2000, Allan 1999)

The attractiveness of Foucault's work for those engaged in research in special education is clear. By making problematic the 'taken-for-granted', new avenues of research have come to the fore (Paechter and Weiner 1996, Allan, Brown and Riddell 1998). Within special education this has led to the examination of the role of professionals in creating ways of not being 'normal' (Tomlinson 1982), and the experiences of those not traditionally given a voice have been heard (e.g., Low 1996, Davis and Watson 2001, Roets and Van Hove 2003). However, there are some limitations to the application of Foucault's work, some of which may of course reflect more on the way in which it has been applied, than on his ideas. The first two of these relate to the 'local' focus of enquiry, the third to a lack of ability to account for differences in individual resistance to discourse.

First I will argue that 'discourse', while useful as an analytical concept at a broad social level, has less purchase as a tool for examining local experiences. It was noted above that Foucault's concept of discourse is an element of his work which has been adopted with enthusiasm by many working in educational research. However, what is meant by 'discourse' is a matter of some dispute; in particular its relationship to ideology, and its association with linguistics (e.g. Purvis and Hunt 1993, Chalaby 1996, Fox 1998). These complex arguments aside, Purvis and Hunt 1993 suggest that discourses can be understood as imposing 'frameworks which limit what can be experienced or the meaning that experience can encompass, and thereby influence what can be said and done' (1993: 485). Whilst discourse is mostly taken to refer to spoken or written language, non-verbal practices can also be read as 'text' (Paechter and Weiner 1996, Purvis and Hunt 1993). In more general sociological texts 'discourse' is most often used to refer to practices (both linguistic and non-verbal) on a large scale, for example the 'regimes of truth' associated with medical sciences (Fox 1998). The significant characteristic of discourse is that it limits how people think and act, we make sense of things in the language that is available to us (Danaher, Schirato and Webb 2000). The use of the concept of discourse to challenge deeply socially embedded 'truths', to

critically examine the way in which they dominate and determine thought and behaviour has clearly been a productive line of enquiry. But it is also the case that Foucault was concerned with examining the local, 'Yes, the problems that I pose are always concerned with local and particular issues' (Foucault 1991:150). However in applying the notion of discourse to local situations, I would argue that much of its powerfulness as an analytical concept is lost.

It is not clear in what way conceiving of the attitudes of staff, or other pupils, towards particular pupils in a school as a discourse moves our understanding on from the less elaborate view which simply sees them as attitudes. Of course, as Foucault argued 'Localizing problems is indispensable for theoretical and political reasons. But that doesn't mean that they are not, however, general problems' (Foucault 1981:152); thus an examination of the ways in which able-bodied peers conceptualise disabled class-mates may tell us much about discourses of disability in general. On the other hand, I would want to argue that the attitudes of individuals, or groups of individuals, within an institution, while influenced by these wider socially embedded discourses, do not have the same determining influence. The question I am posing is when is a way of thinking about something a discourse and when is it simply (and less powerfully) a belief or attitude?

Second, one of the most attractive features of post-modernism for researchers in the social sciences appears to be the possibility that it offers for listening to the voices of the powerless. Moore and Muller (1999) note that the development of the 'sociology of knowledge' which aimed to expose the underlying class basis of existing epistemologies, is 'usually presented as marking a progressive advance, whereby the assault upon the epistemological claims of the dominant or 'hegemonic' knowledge code... enables a succession of previously marginalised, excluded and oppressed groups to enter the central stage' (1999: 191). The concern to rescue agency noted above, can be seen as part of part of this same trend. In effect, taking such an approach to studying the powerless groups in society in order to 'discover' their agency carries with it the

dangerous possibility that the starting point, that this is a powerless group, will be forgotten. The ‘discovery’ that adults in supported accommodation for those with ‘learning disabilities’ resist their stereotyping (Roets and Van Hove 2003) does not make them any less powerless than before the research was conducted. While they may indeed resist the identities put on them by others they remain inmates in supported accommodation.

For Paechter and Weiner it is, ‘By drawing attention to the importance of the ‘local’, they [post-modernists] enable the focus to move to inequalities at the micro-level where researchers are in a position to observe different forms of domination and resistance, largely overlooked by macro, modernist perspectives’ (Paechter and Weiner 1996: 269) However it could equally be argued that by drawing attention to the local the focus is moved away from the macro-level where different forms of domination and oppression will carry on unchallenged (Cole and Hill 1995).

While the two objections to a Foucauldian approach outlined above are at a general level, the third related specifically to this thesis. As has been noted the ability of individuals to ‘transgress’ or ‘resist’ discourses is a popular line of enquiry, however there is no explanation of how individuals ‘learn’ their allotted subjectivity or for the mechanics of their resistance. It is suggested either that individuals find alternative discourses (Raby 2002) or other sources of subjectivity (Garland 1990). However, there is no account of how some individuals appear to have more (better?) agency, that is – how is it that some resist while others internalise the discourse? That there is more going on than ‘discursive practices’ is acknowledged by Raby (2002) ‘Clearly [...] these discursive patterns intersect with, and are disrupted by, class, race, gender and sexuality’ (Raby 2002: 446). I will suggest that in addition to these social structural factors, the interaction between individuals is also significant.

The focus of the second study in this thesis is the contrasting experiences of pupils, and while the research set out to examine any link between curriculum on offer and pupil

experience the data suggested that something more complicated was going on. Taking a Foucauldian approach would lead to the analysis that some pupils internalise while others resist the discourses (although I prefer attitudes for reasons given above) of staff, and that some pupils appear to have different sources of 'subjectivity' available to them. In contrast, taking the approach of symbolic interactionism offers a suggested mechanism for how and in what cases the attitudes of others are accepted or rejected.

3.3 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic Interactionism presents itself in many guises. As will be discussed below there are different versions of it, reflecting different perspectives on the structure/agency relationship. Fine (1993) views the agency/structure issue as central to the symbolic interactionist perspective which seeks to understand how 'individuals negotiate the realities that are structured...and how do structures determine what individuals can and will do?' (Fine 1993:69-70). Contrary perhaps to expectations of a theory which has been described as a response to dissatisfaction with structural- functionalism (Hargreaves, D. 1986), it is not the case that adopting a symbolic interactionist position necessarily involves rejecting the notion of structural constraints on individuals, although some would want to take this view. It will be argued that while these different perspectives have each contributed in significant ways to our understanding of deviance, the version of symbolic interactionism which holds most relevance for this thesis is that which tends towards structural accounts (associated with the 'Iowa school').

The focus of study, or unit of analysis, for symbolic interactionists is the 'social act', in this way they can be seen as occupying a theoretical middle ground between the psychologists and sociologists, and have variously been described as 'micro-sociologists' and 'social psychologists' (Hargreaves, D. 1986). As Stryker notes, 'There is no single orthodoxy which is symbolic interaction theory. There is certainly a hard core of agreement, and there are certainly important differences, among representatives of the position' (1972:435).

The origins of symbolic interactionism are most often traced back to the philosophy of George Herbert Mead, which was a mix of 'philosophical pragmatism' and 'psychological behaviourism' (Ritzer 2000) although others, in particular John Dewey, Charles Horton Cooley and William James are frequently cited as 'founding fathers' (e.g. Kuhn 1964, Stryker 1987, Fine 1993, Gecas 1982).

The rise of symbolic interactionism in the 1970s has been understood as a response to the dominance of structural sociologies and the reductionist behaviourism of Watson which did not consider the active part played by individuals in giving meaning to their situations and actions (Hargreaves, D. 1986, Ritzer 2000). Common themes in the early influential works were that individuals and society are inseparable, there was an interest in the social development of the self, and the belief that individuals are influenced by their social interactions which depend upon shared meanings (Meltzer and Petra 1972). Rosengren sums this up neatly in the observation that, 'it is axiomatic in Mead's psychology that there are functional relationships between how we see ourselves, how we see others, and how we think others see us' (1972: 509). Herbert Blumer described the three basic premises of symbolic interactionism as 'we know things by their meanings, that meanings are created through social interaction, and that meanings change through interaction' (Fine 1993:64)

Fine (1993) offers a history of symbolic interactionism, *The Sad Demise, Mysterious Disappearance, and Glorious Triumph of Symbolic Interactionism*, the title reflecting the mixed fortunes of this body of ideas. The history can be characterised, argues Fine, by fragmentation, expansion, incorporation and adoption. What began as a radical view challenging the positivist orthodoxy now has its basic tenets accepted without question by the mainstream. Although the basic assumptions, in particular that 'subjective experience [is] respectable both as an object of study and as a causal agent in the production of social behaviour' (Stryker 1987) have been accepted, symbolic interactionism initially faced both internal and external problems. It attracted criticism

from a variety of sources, which according to Stryker (1987) fell into three main groups; psychologists who saw it as 'unscientific', ethnomethodologists who argued that it imposed concepts onto the observed and privileged the observer status, and the political left who believed that it defended existing power structures by treating them as unproblematic. These are of course familiar arguments from recognisable viewpoints which can be seen as defending particular value positions rather than specific critiques of symbolic interactionism.

As part of the journey from 'challenging new idea' to 'accepted wisdom', symbolic interactionism was adopted by different groups who interpreted and developed the ideas along divergent lines. Thus the external critiques were accompanied by internal bickering between rival factions each laying claim to be the true inheritor of Mead's work (Hargreaves, D 1986). The two main groups have been named after the Universities in which they were originally based, Chicago (under Blumer) and Iowa (under Kuhn). A discussion of some of the differences in perspectives from these schools (and some of the similarities) will demonstrate that both have a significant contribution to make to our understanding of 'deviance'.

The main points of divergence between these 'schools' are summarised by Meltzer and Petra (1972). The approach of Blumer and his followers in Chicago is described as humanistic. The research method of choice is participant observation; concepts are 'sensitising' in that they guide the area in which the researcher should look; behaviour and the 'self' are seen as processual; and finally, there is an indeterminacy to human behaviour. In contrast, the Iowa School is more positivistic. Studies in this tradition seek to operationalise concepts in order to test them empirically. Concepts are definitive in that they tell the researcher what to look for; the view of 'self' is structural in that it is viewed as relatively stable over time. Finally, the structural nature of human interaction is emphasised, with individuals seen as taking on roles within different groups, and consequently human behaviour is viewed as largely determined.

I am inclined to argue that the differences between these two schools in relation to the issues of the indeterminacy/determinacy of behaviour and the processual/structural nature of self are in fact differences of degree rather than of type; differences which have perhaps been exaggerated in order to present the two schools as radically distinct. For example, Stryker (1987) notes that Goffman, traditionally associated with the Chicago school, 'was at the same time at pains to assert the (partial) interdependence of encounters and the larger social structures of power, authority, etc., within which encounters are embedded' (1987:88). Depending on the position taken on the 'Chicago/Iowa' continuum, different ways of thinking about how individuals come to make sense of their own identity and the consequences of that for behaviour will emerge.

Gecas writes, 'The key feature of the processual interactionist perspective...is its emphasis on the social *situation* as the context in which identities are established and maintained through the process of negotiation.' (1982: 1, italics in original). Gecas uses the term 'role-taking' to describe the dialectical process of identity negotiation, however Meltzer and Petra (1972) distinguish 'role-taking' (assuming a fixed, pre-existing identity) from 'role-making', a more creative and dynamic process, which seems to be more appropriate to the processual perspective.

A different focus, moving slightly away from the individual's experience but still within the processual perspective, is that which examines the process of labelling. This has its origins in the work of Lemert (Wells 1978, Gecas 1982,), but was perhaps most famously developed by Becker (1963). The fundamental assertion is that whatever behaviour comes to be labelled as deviant is arbitrary, but once labelled an individual's self-concept will be altered, 'Treating a person as though he were generally rather than specifically deviant produces a self-fulfilling prophecy. It sets in motion several mechanisms which conspire to shape the person in the image people have of him' (Becker 1963: 34). The 'labelling debate' has a long history in the field of special education (Bailey 1998, Lloyd and Norris 1999, Söder 1989, Booth 1991). In general

terms the 'labelling debate' within education is related to arguments about the social construction of disability (Booth 1991) and the concern that once labelled individuals become defined as 'disabled'. However, in relation to pupils who attract the SEBD label the concern with the possibility of 'secondary deviance' is fundamental.

Matsueda describes the process by which the labelling of behaviour as bad or delinquent, 'in turn, influences the self-image of the child, who comes to view him or herself as bad or delinquent, which in turn increases the likelihood of future deviance' (1992: 1588). An important element of labelling theory, and one which demonstrates the connection between social structure and individual experience, is that individuals who belong to particular social groups are more likely to be labelled as deviant, regardless of their behaviour (Simmons 1965). It should be noted, however, that there are those who consider this to be too deterministic an account of deviance which provides too passive an account of the individual (Gecas 1992).

In general, explanations of socialisation into deviant identities or subcultures tend to be structural as the concept of 'role' becomes central, Gecas writes, 'Identities are viewed mainly as internalized roles' (1982: 14), and much of the work in this area has focussed on the mechanics of how roles are linked to social structures. Cohen (1965) examines theories concerning how deviant behaviour develops in the interaction process. He distinguishes between those theories of deviance which see roles as simply locational, identifying the position in the social structure in which an individual is located and those for which 'roles' are 'part of the categorical system of a society, the socially recognised and meaningful categories of persons. They are the kinds of people it is possible to be in that society. The self is constructed of these possibilities' (1965: 12). Merton's *anomie theory* is an example of the former, in which deviance is seen as the result of a disjunction between what an individual wants and what s/he is able to have, which is in turn dictated by their structural location. The latter is more typical of the structural symbolic interactionist approach taken by Matsueda (1992).

Heimer and Matsueda (1994) defend a structural symbolic interactionist theory of delinquency against competing social control and social disorganization theories. They start with a discussion of the work of Matsueda (1992) who returned to Mead's view that the self consists of the perceived appraisals and evaluations of others. Heimer and Matsueda (1994), perhaps in an attempt to explain some of the findings from Matsueda's earlier study which appeared to evade explanation from a symbolic interactionist perspective, argue that it was limited in that it failed to take sufficient account of the link between interactions and social organisation. For Heimer and Matsueda (1994) role-taking at the individual level involves seeing oneself from the perspective of others. When adopting the role or perspective of the other, the individual sees themselves, 'me' as an object, and the 'me' that they see is constituted by past experiences. However, role-taking, for Heimer and Matsueda, is not only an individual level process but is also linked to the social organisation, 'Social organization is a configuration of roles or perspectives that constrains the form, content and participants of interaction' (Heimer and Matsueda 1994: 368). The social organisation constitutes the 'generalised other' and the more an individual is committed to a particular role in a social group, the more likely it is that that group will act as a 'generalized other'.

Similarly, Gecas (1982) questions the way in which the appraisal of others can influence self-perception. He notes that there are mediating factors which may affect the extent to which such appraisal is internalised. First, it is not clear that how A is *actually* perceived by B is the same as how B *appears* to perceive A. Second, Gecas (1982) draws on research which suggests, in agreement with Heimer and Matsueda's (1994) notion of commitment to particular groups noted above, that the credibility of the person doing the evaluating is significant. Simply put, if I don't hold you in high regard I am less likely to take seriously your opinion of me. Finally Gecas notes the 'active distorting influence of the self-concept' (1982: 6). That is, the tendency of individuals to believe good about themselves.

Sykes and Matza (1957) also provide an account of ways in which an individual may

resist internalising the negative appraisal of others. Sykes and Matza (1957) criticised Cohen's 'status frustration' explanation of deviance which sees 'delinquents' as asserting that their norms and values are 'right'. They argue that 'delinquents' share the same system of norms and values as others, but are able to avoid self-blame by the judicious use of justification or 'neutralization' techniques. There are, they contend, five major types of techniques. First is the denial of responsibility: the idea that the individual is not responsible for his or her behaviour. Second is the denial of injury: asserting that no one has been hurt. Third, the 'delinquent' may assert that the victim of their 'crime' deserved the treatment he or she received. Fourth, and similar to Gecas' (1982) notion of credibility, those who are critical of the behaviour can be rejected. The final technique is to appeal to a different set of social norms – or a 'higher authority'.

In terms of this thesis, a symbolic interactionist perspective will facilitate an examination of the ways in which individuals who have been labelled as 'deviant' by virtue of their placement in special provision make sense of the appraisals of individuals and groups around them. It will foreground the question of how individuals in different institutions make sense of themselves, and also how individuals in the same institution come to have different experiences.

Research Questions

A number of themes have emerged from the preceding three chapters. It has already been stated that a first step in this research must be to map out the existing provision. In addition to the basic mapping exercise, which will provide a context within which to set the later case studies, other more specific questions which have emerged from the first three chapters will be addressed.

It is clear that the ethos of separate schools for pupils with SEBD is an important area. The tension between welfare and punitive approaches identified in chapter one, coupled with the review of literature relating to ethos in chapter two, and the different ways of

constructing childhood discussed in chapter three, all suggest that the ethos of schools can vary widely and is likely to be influenced by factors both within and outwith individual institutions. It will therefore be important to address questions concerning the ethos of schools in both the survey and case studies. At the survey stage this will be investigated through questions relating to underlying principles, methods of intervention and rates of exclusion. In the case studies questions will be asked of the pupils concerning their perception of the school ethos.

A second theme from the first 3 chapters is the issue of the stigmatization of pupils who have acquired the label SEBD. In chapter one it was noted that these pupils are generally not included in the overall movement of pupils with additional support needs from special to mainstream education, possibly as a consequence of the particular challenges they place on schools. It was argued that the social inclusion agenda has given legitimacy to the notion that pupils with SEBD are an exception. In chapter two the conflicting literature relating to stigmatization and re-signification was discussed. In this chapter symbolic interactionism has been presented as one perspective from which to examine the way in which young people in separate provision make sense of their own identity, in relation to the perceptions of those around them. The issue of stigmatization, relating as it does to personal experience, is one which is directly addressed most appropriately through the case studies. However the issue is also picked up in the survey in which respondents are asked to describe their perceptions of changes in the pupil population. As will be discussed in chapter 5 this generated data which suggests that overall the perception of these pupils by those responding is negative, with a tendency to view pupils as presenting with increasingly complex needs and increasingly challenging behaviour.

A third theme from the preceding chapters has been the issue of curriculum provision. In chapter one the value traditionally placed on academic subjects and the importance of the 'one-size fits all' curriculum in the Scottish context were noted along with more recent moves to introduce a flexible curriculum. In chapter two arguments both for and

against the delivery of an alternative curriculum were presented. It is be important to address issues relating to the curriculum in both the survey and case studies. In the survey schools are asked to report the type of curriculum on offer and their views of whether a mainstream curriculum is appropriate for their pupils. In the case studies, pupils are asked for their views on the type of curriculum they are offered.

These three themes of ethos, stigma and curriculum run through both the survey and the case studies. In addition the survey tackles the need to generate a map of provision as well as, as described in chapter two, addressing issues of measuring effectiveness. In the case studies the research questions are as follows:

- How does the curriculum on offer relate to the pupils' perceptions of the ethos of the school, in particular their views on behaviour management and relationships?
- Is there evidence of either stigma or re-signification in the pupils, and does this vary according to the type of curriculum they are offered?
- How do pupils describe the differences in their educational experience in mainstream and separate provision? What are their views on the type of curriculum they are offered and how this relates to their mainstream experience?

Conclusion

In conclusion, while the broad 'philosophical' perspective taken in this thesis owes much to the school of critical realism, the theoretical perspective from which the data from the second study will be examined is structural symbolic interactionism. The first study, being largely descriptive in character will not be examined by any particular theoretical approach, although any apparent points of articulation with any of the major theories summarised above will be noted.

Chapter Four

Introduction

As was discussed in chapter 2 a major aim of this research was to provide a ‘map’ of existing separate educational provision for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in Scotland. The intention was to provide information such as the number of schools in each sector (private, local authority or voluntary), their history and current aims, underlying principles, and links with mainstream schools. Enquires to the Scottish Executive Education Department revealed that there was no centrally held record of available provision. Whilst ‘special’ schools do respond to the school census, the information gathered is not collated for each category of provision and therefore there is no summary form of data on this particular group of schools. In addition the information requested by the census is limited to length of the school week, numbers of teachers and non-teaching staff, ICT in the school and basic pupil information¹

This research is also concerned with more specific questions regarding the profile of the pupils attending separate schools for children with SEBD; the type of educational provision on offer; and the best way to evaluate such provision. It was intended that pupil profiles, in terms of the age and stage, gender, ethnicity, social class, diagnosis of ADHD, learning difficulties, and poverty, would be compared with national figures to investigate how pupils in separate provision compare with the general pupil population and with pupils excluded from school. In practice these comparisons have not always been easy to make as existing data sets differ according to how the data is reported. One example of this is the change in categories of ethnic origin in official documents over time. In order to try to ensure comparisons were being made between data from the same time period, wherever possible official

¹ Form SC1: Spec – Special Schools or Departments

statistics for 2001/ 2002 have been used to match the data collection period for this research which was September 2002.

The education on offer, in terms of the curriculum (both formal and alternative), certification on offer and teaching group size were examined to provide information to inform a discussion of the issues around curriculum provision discussed in chapter two. Views of practitioners were sought on what criteria for evaluation of their service they consider valid on the basis that for separate provision to be evaluated in a meaningful way these views should be taken into account. Finally, at the outset it was hoped that emerging patterns or issues from the first study could be used to guide the choice of schools for the second. Indeed this turned out to be the case as it became apparent that differing views on the most appropriate curriculum is a key issue for practitioners.

1. The survey

The schools included in this research were taken from the SOEID SEN Directory which was last updated in November 1998. At this point some decisions had to be made concerning which schools to include. First, as the focus of study was the separate provision for children with SEBD, special units attached to mainstream schools were not included. In order to study key features of separate provision it was necessary to look only at that provision which was distinct both in terms of location and management systems from the mainstream provision. Second, only schools which recorded 'the needs being provided for on census day' as SEBD alone were included. Some schools catered for pupils with a wide range of needs, in particular SEBD is often found alongside MLD (moderate learning difficulties). As this research sought to find out about the nature of provision for children with SEBD it was important not to 'muddy the waters' by looking at provision designed for a different pupil population. For each individual child schools record the main difficulty in learning, therefore a child judged to have both SEBD and MLD would be recorded according to what was felt to be their biggest barrier to learning. This

study is concerned with the nature of provision for children for whom the biggest barrier to learning has been identified as SEBD. In total 44 schools were identified from the SOEID SEN directory as meeting the criteria for this study.

1.1 Questionnaire design

The purpose of the study was to elicit largely numerical data which could be used to build up an overall picture of the provision in Scotland. It was predicted that some of the requested data could be collated from existing school census returns. Given the geographical spread of the schools, time, funding and the nature of the data required a postal questionnaire was selected as the most appropriate research tool. However the postal survey does have disadvantages (Gillham 2000), in particular throughout the design stage it was important to be constantly aware of the importance of maximising the return rate. As the data was to be analysed using SPSS to calculate simple frequencies and cross-tabulations, the questionnaire was designed with this method of analysis in mind.

Having identified specific objectives and a target population the next stage in questionnaire design is the construction of items (Borg and Gall 1989, Burns 2000). A national survey of special schools for pupils with EBD in England and Wales was conducted by Visser, Cole and Upton in 1996/7 (Cole *et al.* 1998). This was based on the questionnaire used by Wilson and Evans in 1980 for a similar study. While this survey addresses some of the same issues and is designed for the same type of respondent, it was not possible to simply replicate it. Some questions were not necessary for the purposes of this study; some questions were not compatible with the Scottish context, and finally other questions were added to reflect the specific research questions of this study. Although the original questionnaire was not replicated exactly, permission to use it was sought and granted by ITPD Ltd who hold the royalty rights for Wilson and Evans (1980).

It was felt to be important that the target respondents were able to identify with the questions asked as this might have an impact on increasing their motivation to

respond. In order to maximise this it was important that familiar terminology was used and that the questions could be seen to be relevant. To this end all 44 schools in the sample were written to in February 2001, the research project was introduced and a school brochure was requested (Appendix B). Of these 44 schools 31 replied enclosing their brochure, no reply was received from eight, and the remaining five had closed sometime after their listing on the 1988 SEN directory, reducing the population to 39. Of the five that had closed, three were local authority provision from one local authority area.

The language and content of the school brochures, coupled with the existing questionnaires and consideration of the research questions informed the construction of the questionnaire items. Where possible, to assist respondents, information was requested in the same form as it is collated for the special school census.

Following Moser and Kalton (1971), Smith (1975), Borg and Gall (1989) and Burns (2000), due attention was paid to question order, removing ambiguity and jargon, discrete and exhaustive categories, and avoiding 'double-barrelled' and leading questions. A mixture of closed and open-ended items was used; approximately 70% of the questions were closed, facilitating analysis using SPSS. The open questions gave respondents space to elaborate on their answers to the closed questions. In addition, open questions provide the possibility of unpredicted issues being raised (Burns 2000). Fowler implies that respondents prefer a mix of open and closed questions as, 'To answer only by choosing a provided response and never to have an opportunity to answer some questions in their own mind can be a frustrating experience' (2002: 91). However, Fowler later states that, 'Self-administered questionnaires mainly should be restricted to closed answers' (2002: 111). Smith (1975) suggests that the use of closed or open questions depends on a number of factors such as the objectives of the survey and the motivation of the respondents. In this case the purpose of the survey was both to gather quantitative information and to identify any particularly interesting issues which may be followed up at a later stage. In addition it was felt that the target group of respondents (school principals or head teachers) would be willing and able to express their views through the open question

format. Open questions do present more of a challenge at the analysis stage, but as Smith writes, 'It is inexcusable to use a closed-ended questionnaire simply to avoid the content analysis problems of open-ended questions' (1975: 174)

A number of rating scale questions were used, the scale had five points allowing a neutral response. There are reported weaknesses associated with this type of question: respondents tend to give a positive response regardless of how they actually feel (Fowler 2002), and although the options are ordered it cannot be assumed that the distance between the items on the scale is the same (Nachmias and Nachmias 1987), thus a summary of responses is limited to how many people gave a particular answer, rather than calculating average responses for each question (Munn and Drever 1995). Whilst acknowledging these difficulties, the rating scale type of question was felt to be most appropriate for this group of respondents and the type of analysis planned. Similar difficulties are associated with ranking questions, of which there is one in the questionnaire, in particular at the analysis stage the temptation to average scores must be avoided (Gillham 2000). The design of the questionnaire in terms of layout, use of headings and sections, print size, clear instructions, and pathways through questions was developed with the main objective of maximising return rates in mind.

The final stage of design was piloting or pre-testing the questionnaire. The purpose of this was to identify any problems with the language used, ambiguities, or other difficulties with completion, and also to obtain an idea of how long the questionnaire would take to complete. As recommended by Borg and Gall (1989) individuals drawn from a similar population to the sample were asked to complete the questionnaire. The pre-test group included the principal from a residential secondary school which was excluded from the study as it caters for children with other primary difficulties, although those described as SEBD comprise the main pupil population. The former assistant head teacher from one school in the sample group, who had recently moved into the FE sector, and two other specialist SEBD teachers were also included. This piloting raised concerns as to the amount of time the questionnaire would take to complete. It was decided to remove a section asking for details of

staffing levels and training as this information was the most time consuming for respondents to gather and inclusion may have adversely affected the return rate. The edited version was estimated by the pre-test group to take up to an hour to complete.

The finished questionnaire comprised 35 questions over 14 pages of A4 and can be found in Appendix C. This was made into booklet form and the covering letter with return date was incorporated into the booklet to avoid it becoming separated (Gillham 2000). Telephone calls were made to the 39 remaining schools to determine the correct addressee. By this time a further school had closed, one had significantly changed the type of service it provided, and no longer met the criteria for inclusion, and another two had merged. All four schools involved were local authority provision. Thus the population had further reduced to 36. Two other schools reported significant changes, one from independent residential to local authority day provision and another from education provision as part of a residential unit to a day education centre, however these schools were judged to still meet the criteria for inclusion in the study. I was unable to contact three schools, therefore questionnaires were sent to the last named head teacher.

1.2 Questionnaire Response

Questionnaires were sent to 36 schools, along with stamped self-addressed envelopes, in September 2002. A follow-up letter was sent to those who had failed to reply by one week after the return date in mid October (Appendix D). One private school replied with the information that the provision they offered was undergoing major alterations and therefore they were not in a position to respond. The former head teacher of another, local authority, school telephoned to say that the provision she had previously run had recently been closed and the staff involved had been reallocated to supporting pupils in mainstream schools. One private school returned the questionnaire but noted that the original school had closed in 2000 for 'refurbishment' and had re-opened in 2002 under a different name, with new management and staff and currently only had one pupil. One school requested a second questionnaire, but this was not returned.

Finally a telephone call was made to those who had failed to respond to the reminder letter by the beginning of November. Additional questionnaires were sent to schools who had mislaid the original. Two schools took up the offer at this point to complete the questionnaire by telephone. Of the follow-up strategies used, the telephone call was the most productive, generating a further ten responses. In total, 34 schools were open and able to respond at the time of the survey, only 5 did not do so. Table 4.1 records the response rate at different stages. The final telephone call to under-represented schools which brought the total number of returns to 29 is discussed in more detail below.

Date	Action	Number of requests	Number of responses	Closed/ unable to complete	Response rate (as % of 34 possible)
Feb 01	request for brochure	44		5	
August 02	preliminary phone call	39		3	
September 02	initial mailing	36	13		38.2%
October 02	follow-up letter	23	3	2	47.1%
November 02	telephone call	17	10		76.5%
December 02	Final call to under-represented schools	4	3		85.3%
Totals			29	10	

Table 4.1 Response rate

This study is a census as it surveyed 100% of the described population (Burns 2002). There are characteristics of this population which would lead to a prediction of a high return rate; it is a select group of professionals who are familiar with the topic and could be expected to identify with the goals of the study. Balanced against this was the length of the questionnaire, and the lack of ‘sponsorship’ (Nachmias and Nachmias 1987). Cohen and Manion (2000) present a typical pattern of responses to successive follow-ups, from an initial return of 40% an additional 20, 10 and 5% return could be expected at each stage. Nachmias and Nachmias (1987) suggest a

different pattern, with an initial return of around 23.8% and an additional 18.2, 17 and 13.4% returns subsequently. Although the pattern of increase in responses is different, both give a final expected return of around 75%. The pattern of responses in this study is unusual in that the third follow-up, the telephone call increased the response rate by 29%, this is in contrast to the 'law of diminishing returns' suggested by Cohen and Manion (2000:263).

Nachmias and Nachmias (1987) report findings that quality of responses declines with successive mailings. The suggestion is that respondents who have had to be reminded a number of times are less likely to be interested in the study and therefore less likely to take the time to complete it with care. It is difficult to assess the quality of responses, other than by number of questions not answered, and by this criterion there was no evidence of declining quality. It may be that the responses received after the telephone call were completed less accurately, but it may also be that the delay in responding is an indicator of the time pressures on the head teachers or principals rather than a lack of interest in the study.

What constitutes an 'acceptable' response rate to a postal questionnaire should not simply be a matter of percentages, but should take into account the claims which are to be made on the basis of the responses received. Most large-scale surveys are conducted on samples of populations with a view to gathering information which can be generalised to the larger population (Fowler 2002). In such 'sample surveys' any claims to generalisability will depend on the method of sampling, the response rate and the representativeness of the non-respondents. This study did not sample but targeted the total population; however the ability to make comments about the whole population can still be limited by a low response rate. In particular, non-response can lead to problems of bias if a particular section of the population is less likely to respond. It was therefore important to try to gather as much information as possible about the non-responding schools.

Out of a total of 34 schools able to respond, by November '02 eight had not done so. Of these, the head teacher of one had been on long-term absence and had only

recently returned to work. Two schools had vacant head teacher posts, including the newly merged school. Four of the remaining five were schools where the administrative staff operated as extremely effective 'gate-keepers' and personal contact with the head teacher or principal had not been possible. This personal contact may be crucial as all of the returns following the telephone reminder were from schools where such contact had been possible.

One method of correcting for non-responses suggested by Fowler (2002) is the use of proxies; that is, getting the same information from a different source. The SEN directory contains information about management, school roll and whether the provision is day or residential. In addition, five of the non-respondents had sent brochures in response to the first request. These sources, although up to four years old, provided sufficient information to make a judgement as to the representativeness or otherwise of the respondents as discussed below.

On the key dimensions of primary or secondary, status, and day or residential, four of the eight non-respondents share the same profile: day, primary and local authority. Referring back to the total population, only six schools in total fit this profile. Therefore the response rate from this type of school is two out of a possible six or 33%, compared with an overall response rate of 76%. Further telephone calls were made to these four schools explaining the concern that the views of this type of provision may be under represented. As a result three further responses were received, bringing the total response rate to 85% and the response for this type of school to 83%. The final results therefore can be said to be broadly representative of the sample population along these key dimensions. In addition the response rate of 85% is sufficient to allow confidence when identifying patterns in responses.

2. Analysis

SPSS 10 was used to analyse the responses to closed questions. A content analysis of the open questions was carried out; the coding from this analysis was then also

entered into SPSS. At this stage a colleague who was intending to use a similar method in her own research volunteered to review my coding of the open questions in order to improve reliability. The degree of agreement was high, any responses which we had coded differently were examined together and agreement reached.

The questionnaire was divided into five sections, 'about the school', 'about the pupils', 'about the curriculum', 'about the approaches used' and 'about evaluating effectiveness'. The remainder of this chapter is a presentation of findings arranged under these five headings.

2.1 The Schools

Status

Question four asked about the status of the schools in terms of their management. Two schools selected the 'other' response, the first of these is grant-aided, the second is described as 'independent'. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show the status of schools broken down by 'day or residential' and 'primary or secondary'. There is only one local authority school which offers residential provision. Private schools are more likely than others to offer residential places. There is a similar mix of primary and secondary provision across the three main sectors.

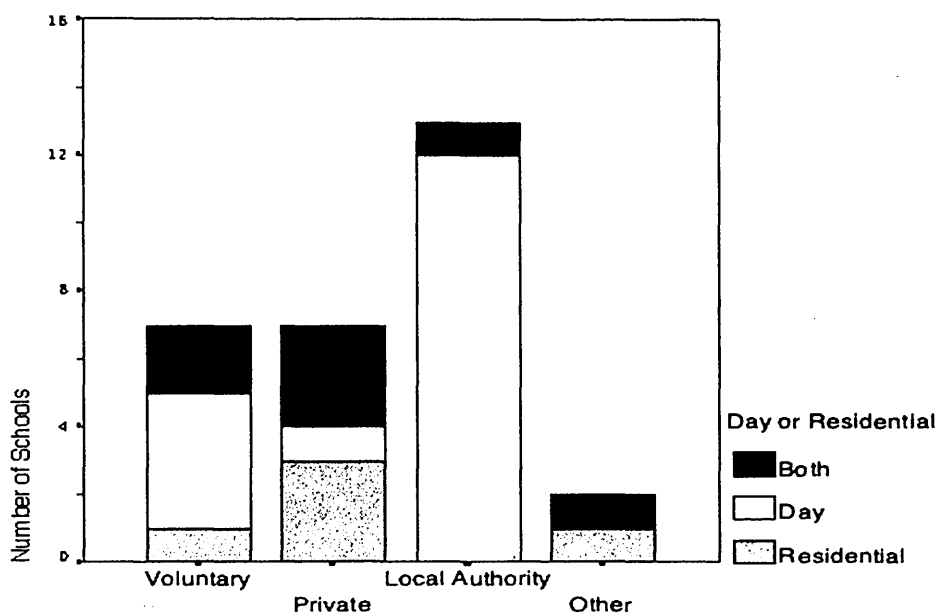


Figure 4.1 Status by Day/Residential/Both.

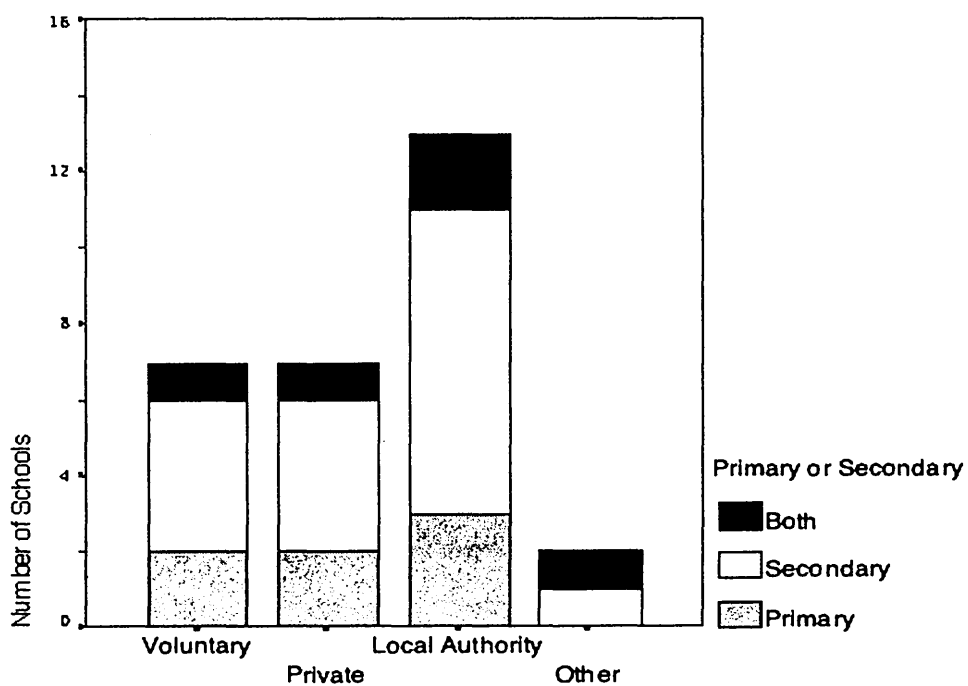


Figure 4.2 Status by Primary/Secondary/Both.

Changes in provision

Question 5(b) was an open question, asking ‘If the nature of the provision of your school has changed significantly in the last 20 years (*e.g. status, remit, age or gender of children, becoming residential/day*) please give details’. Respondents were able to give as many or as few changes as they wanted. Responses are shown in Table 4.2. Of the 29 schools responding to the survey, only eight did not mention any changes and thus the 25 changes noted in the table were spread across 21 schools. While 12 schools continue to offer residential places, seven report such provision having closed. Thus less than half of the schools currently offer residential places compared with approximately 2/3 of schools twenty years ago.

Changes	Number of schools
Residential provision closed	7
Increase in residential provision	2
Increase in day provision	3
Change in age-group	7
New service	6
<i>Total number of changes mentioned</i>	25
<i>Schools which noted no changes</i>	8

Table 4.2 Changes in provision

Number of pupil places and occupancy

Figure 4.3 shows the number of places available in schools broken down by primary, secondary or both. All but one of the primary schools has 26 places or less while 10 of the 16 secondary schools have more than 26 places.

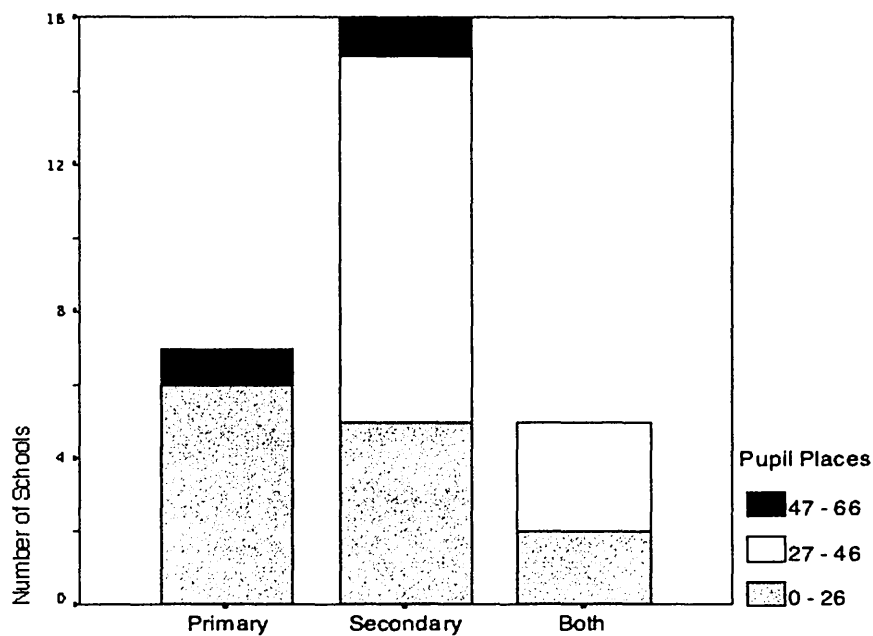


Figure 4.3 Primary/secondary by school size

2.2 Pupils

The second section of the questionnaire asked for information about the pupils attending the schools. The purpose of these questions was to identify any patterns in the social or educational background of these pupils.

Gender, stage and day/residential

The gender, stage and day or residential status of pupils in the 29 schools is shown in Table 4.3. S3/4 boys attending as day pupils are by far the biggest 'cohort'. There are more girls in residential placements than in day places.

Stage	Day Boys	Residential Boys	Day Girls	Residential Girls	Total
P1-P3	29	2	2	0	33
P4-P7	110	50	6	2	168
S1-S2	116	59	2	13	190
S3-S4	191	100	27	35	353
S5-S6	41	6	10	4	61
Total	487	217	47	54	805

Table 4.3 Pupil profile

'Types' of SEBD

Question 11, asked respondents to place their pupils into categories according to the 'type' of social, emotional or behavioural difficulty that is predominant. A summary of responses to this question is shown in Table 4.4. After actual numbers of pupils in each category this figure is given as a percentage of the total pupil population of that gender to the nearest whole number.

Numbers of boys and girls attending school predominantly because of:	Boys	Girls	Totals
Behavioural difficulties	174 (24%)	15 (15%)	189 (23%)
Emotional Difficulties	15 (2%)	7 (6%)	22 (3%)
Social Difficulties	12 (2%)	1 (1%)	13 (2%)
Two or Three of the above (none predominant)	509 (72%)	80 (78%)	589 (72%)
Totals	710 (100%)	103 (100%)	813 (100%)

Table 4.4 Social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties

There is a discrepancy between the total number of pupils in Table 4.3 (805) and in Table 4.4 (813). This can be explained by the tendency of some respondents to use estimates in responding to question 11, in a number of cases rather than numerical values being entered there were comments written such as ‘about half’, or ‘almost all’. In these cases a calculation was made on the basis of the known population of that school and a figure calculated. It is clear that the respondents are most likely to report their pupils as having a combination of difficulties, although a quarter of boys are said to have only ‘behavioural difficulties’. This figure is lower for girls, of whom only 15% are thought to have only ‘behavioural difficulties’, whereas they are more likely (6%) than boys (2%) to be described as having only ‘emotional difficulties’.

Incidence of difficulties in learning

Information about the incidence of some categories of learning difficulty, autistic spectrum disorder and ADHD was sought in questions 12a and 12b. The categories in question 12a were selected as being those most likely to co-occur with SEBD, however no pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties were recorded. The categories used were selected from the special school census form on which only the main area of difficulty in learning is noted, and therefore they are mutually exclusive. Question 12b related to ADHD which is not currently a category on the school census, as the question regarding ADHD was asked separately it may be that some pupils will be recorded in one of the first four categories *and* as having ADHD.

Table 4.5 shows the frequencies reported, once again percentages are of the total pupil population of that gender to the nearest whole number, or decimal place where necessary. The final column gives the percentage of pupils with a record of needs for each of the categories of learning difficulty in mainstream primary and secondary schools calculated from the September 2002 census (Scottish Executive 2003a). Statistics on excluded pupils only record those who have a record of need, approximately 4% of those excluded in 2001/2 (Scottish Executive 2003b), but do not break this down into main areas of difficulty. There is a much higher incidence of specific and moderate learning difficulties in particular in the SEBD school

population. Boys are more likely than girls to be identified as having these difficulties in learning.

Difficulty in Learning	Boys	Girls	Mainstream
Specific learning difficulty	73 (10%)	6 (6%)	0.9%
Moderate learning difficulty	78 (11%)	2 (2%)	0.7%
Autistic spectrum disorder	17 (2%)	1 (1%)	0.2%
<i>Totals for the above mutually exclusive categories</i>	168 (24%)	9 (9%)	
ADHD	138 (17%)	6 (6%)	

Table 4.5 Difficulty in learning

Record of Need

The ‘Recording’ of children with special educational needs has been reviewed and superseded by new legislation (*The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004*). However at the time of the survey local authorities continued to have a duty to record those children over the age of 2 years who have 'pronounced, specific or complex needs ...which require continuing review...' (*Education (Scotland) Act 1980* section 135). The number of children with a record of need is shown in Table 4.6. Percentages given are of total number of pupils in that category – for example, male day pupils – and are given to the nearest whole number.

These figures only tell how many pupils have a record, not what particular need is being recorded. In particular it is not known how many of these records mention SEBD rather than other attendant difficulties such as a specific learning difficulty. The overall percentage of children attending separate provision for children with SEBD who have a record of need is 9.4%. This compares with a figure of 79.6% of pupils attending all publicly funded special schools at September 2002 who had a record of need (Scottish Executive 2003c). Pupils in special schools for SEBD are therefore much less likely to have a record of need than pupils in other special

schools. Girls in SEBD provision are even less likely to have a record of need than the boys.

	Boy	Girls	Total
Day	54 (11%)	2 (4%)	56 (10%)
Residential	19 (9%)	1 (2%)	20 (7%)
Total	73 (10%)	3 (3%)	76 (9%)

Table 4.6 Record of Need

Ethnic groups

Question 13 asked schools to indicate the ethnic groups to which their pupils belong. The categories used were the same as those given in the most recent Scottish Executive statistics for exclusions from school by ethnic background available at the time the questionnaire was designed (Scottish Executive 2002b). These categories are not ideal; in particular more recent statistics (for 2003/4) on pupils excluded have included the categories of occupational traveller, Gypsy Traveller and other traveller. These three groups have the highest rates of exclusions per 1000 pupils of all categories (Scottish Executive 2005) and are therefore a very significant group which is omitted from this research. Responses are shown in Table 4.7; figures are given as percentages of total populations and national figures are those from the 2002 school census (Scottish Executive 2003a). The exclusion from mainstream by ethnic origin figures are given to two decimal places, given the very small percentages involved, and to allow comparison, the other figures have also been rounded to two decimal places.

White pupils make up a higher proportion of the separate provision population, whereas those of Pakistani origin are comparatively under-represented. Interestingly, when the ethnic origin of pupils in all publicly funded special schools

is examined for the same year, Pakistani pupils appear to be over represented as they comprise 2.2% of the special school population (Scottish executive 2003a).

Ethnic group	Pupils in separate provision	School census 2002: pupil population	Exclusions from mainstream 2000/01
White	99.13%	89.53%	88.22%
Chinese	0%	0.27%	0.06%
Indian	0%	0.32%	0.09%
Pakistani	0.12%	1.08%	0.81%
Bangladeshi	0%	0.06%	0.02%
Black Caribbean	0.12%	0.01%	0.04%
Black African	0%	0.13%	0.02%
Black Other	0.25%	0.06%	0.08%
Mixed	0.25%	0.51%	
Any Other	0.12%	0.52%	0.65%
Not known or divulged	0%	6.24%	10.02%

Table 4.7 Ethnic Group

Home Background

Questions 14 and 15 asked respondents about the home background of their pupils. A variety of indicators of social class have been used in educational research, none of which was satisfactory for the purposes of this study. The most frequently used indicators are uptake of free school meals or school clothing vouchers. These are unsatisfactory as many of the schools in the survey provide meals regardless of parental income, either because the school is residential or because eating together is viewed as an important part of the school/community life. Similarly, those schools which require uniform often provide it for the pupils. Other indicators, such as asking staff to categorise the home environment are difficult as they presume a familiarity with the home area which may not in fact be the case, especially where children are being educated some distance from home. For these reasons it was decided to ask for an estimate of the number of children living in households where

no adult was in full-time employment. This figure was then used to calculate the percentage of pupils in such households for each school. Table 4.8 shows the results.

	No Response	Estimated percentage of pupils living in homes in which no adult is in full-time employment.			
		20-39 %	40-59 %	60 – 79 %	80-100 %
Number of schools	6	5	7	8	3

Table 4.8: Pupils in homes in which no adult is in full-time employment

In addition to those included in the table above, two schools gave the response ‘the majority’ to this question; the four remaining schools did not answer the question. An overall percentage of pupils in separate provision thought to live in households where no adult is in full-time employment was calculated to be 57%. In 2002 the national figure of dependent children living in ‘workless’ households was 14% (Scottish Executive 2002c).

The profile of home base for the 805 children and young people in separate provision is shown in Table 4.9. Percentages have been rounded to whole numbers. The percentage of pupils in separate provision living in single parent families is 33%, this compares with 22% of all children in Scotland at the time of the 2001 census, living in such households (Scottish Executive 2002d).

Home base	Number of pupils	
Both Parents (Biological, Step or adoptive)	156	(19 %)
Single Parent	263	(33%)
Parent and Partner	107	(13%)
Carers (including family)	60	(8%)
Local Authority Accommodation	43	(5%)
Other	8	(1%)
Not Known	22	(3%)
52 week placement at school	146	(18 %)
Total	805	(100%)

Table 4.9 Home base

Exclusion and attendance

Question 19 asked schools to give details of exclusions from school in the previous week, how many half days were lost and how many pupils were involved. In the week preceding completion of the questionnaire 15 pupils were temporarily excluded, missing a total of 68 half school days as a result. At the time the questionnaire was designed, the Scottish Executive gave overall statistics for number of half days lost to exclusion per 1000 pupils (Scottish Executive 2002b). However, in following years the data is presented for primary and secondary pupils separately (Scottish Executive 2003d). As some of the schools in this survey have both primary and secondary pupils it is not possible to divide up the half days lost to exclusion into these categories. In order to compare the number given by the schools with national figures first it is necessary to extrapolate the separate provision figures for this week to a whole school year, and second to combine the national figures for primary and secondary pupils. These calculations are shown in the footnote².

² 68 half days were missed due to exclusion out of a possible attendance of 7345, this gives a percentage of half days lost as 0.9%.

Possible half day attendance for one year = (805 [pupil population] x 380 [half days in school year]) = 305900.

0.9% of 305900 gives a projected annual number of half days lost to exclusion as 2753 over one year for 805 pupils.

To calculate average no. of half days lost per 1000 pupils, (2753 x 1000)/805 = 3420

The projected number of half days lost to exclusion is 3420 per 1000 pupils in separate provision compared with 435 half days per 1000 pupils in mainstream. Nationally, 29 pupils were excluded per 1000 pupils in the year 2001/2 (Scottish executive 2003b): in the week preceding the questionnaire responses fifteen out of 805 pupils were temporarily excluded from separate provision. It is clear then that there are significantly higher rates of exclusion in separate provision.

Question 20 asked for numbers of half days absence (including authorised, unauthorised and absence due to exclusion) in the previous week, the number of pupils absent in this week and the total possible attendance. In order to make comparison with statistics available for mainstream schools a total percentage of non-attendance was calculated for primary and secondary schools, the responses from mixed primary and secondary schools have not been included. Table 4.10 shows the percentage of absence broken down by primary/secondary or both alongside national averages (Scottish Executive 2002e). With the caveat that caution must be exercised when comparing figures for a week with annual figures, rates of attendance are not hugely dissimilar.

Thus the projected number of half days lost to exclusion is 3420 per 1000 pupils.

Nationally, the number of half days lost per 1000 primary pupils = 77, the number of half days lost per 1000 secondary pupils = 910. The school census for that year records 420521 primary pupils and 316359 secondary pupils.

$[(77 \times 420) + (910 \times 316)] / 736 = 435$, thus the number of half days lost to exclusion per 1000 pupils is 435.

These calculations provide a basis on which to make a comparison but should be treated with some caution as they provide approximate figures only.

	Number of schools which did not respond	Percentage of half-day sessions missed due to absence	
		Separate provision: week of survey	Mainstream: annual figure for 2001/2
Primary	1	3.8%	5.07%
Secondary	0	13.8%	11.07%

Table 4.10 Half days missed due to non attendance

Characteristics and behaviours of pupils in the school

Around three-quarters of the schools reported either having a ‘very substantial’ or a ‘substantial’ say in which pupils are admitted. All six of those which described themselves as having ‘little’ or ‘almost no’ say are local authority provision.

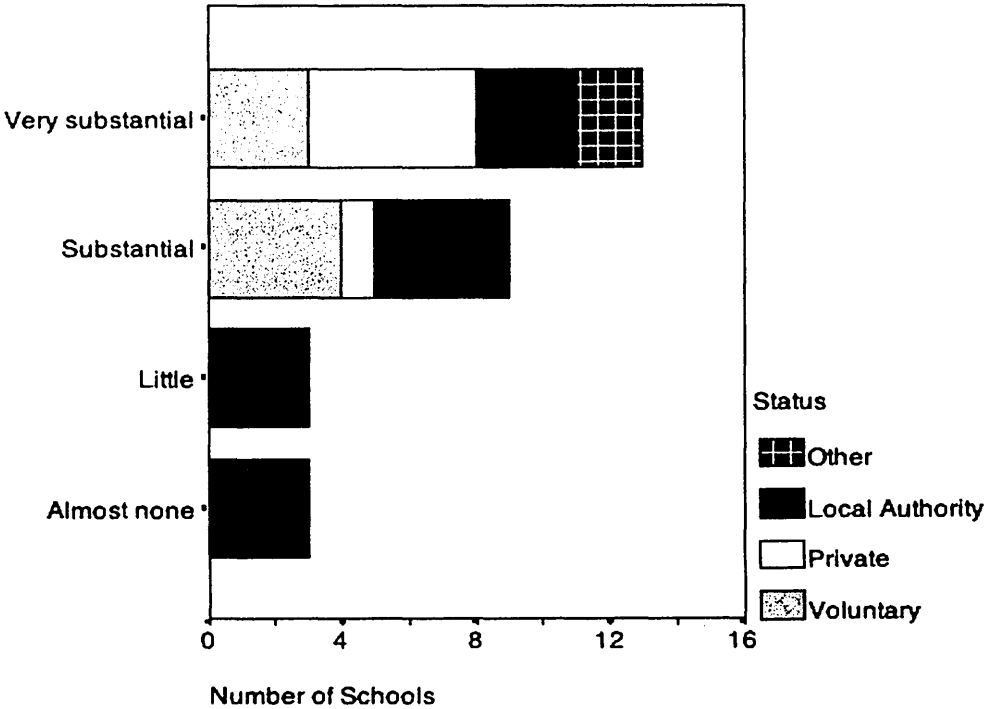


Figure 4.4 How much say does the school have in admissions procedure?
by status

Question 22 asked about reasons for opposing admission of pupils and reasons for exclusion. As many respondents gave the same response to both sections, or simply wrote ‘as above’, it was decided to analyse parts a) and b) together. There were seven categories of response identified, these are shown in Table 4.11 along with the number of times they were mentioned.

Reason	Number of responses which mention it
Pupil has a specific need which the school is unable to meet	15
Violence or assault	16
Lack of parental support or other care partner	6
Effect on existing pupil population	3
Risk to self or others	4
Age on referral	3
Non co-operation with placement by pupil	4
<i>Number of schools responding to this question</i>	<i>27</i>

Table 4.11 Reasons for refusing admission and/or excluding

The responses were cross-tabulated with status, day or residential and primary or secondary. Whilst the sample size is too small for detailed statistical analysis to be meaningful, the following trends were identified.

- Day schools, secondary schools and voluntary schools are the ones which, on average, give more possible reasons for refusing admission to, or excluding, pupils.
- The schools which most commonly mention violence as a reason for opposing admission or excluding are local authority (75% of which mention it), secondary (76%), and day (75%). In contrast residential (25%), primary (20%) and voluntary (43%) mention it least often.
- Five schools commented that they do not, either as a matter of principle or a point of law, permanently exclude pupils.
- Violence is frequently mentioned, but is usually prefaced with ‘extreme’ or ‘repeated’.

Change in pupil intake

Question 23 first asked ‘Has the nature of the pupil intake of your school changed in the last five years?’ Two schools chose not to respond to this question. The responses, broken down by status, are shown in Table 4.12. From these responses it would appear that the voluntary sector has been the most likely to experience a change in pupil intake, with 86% of schools in this sector answering ‘yes’.

Status	Has the nature of pupil intake changed?		Did not respond	Total
	NO	YES		
Voluntary	1	6		7
Private	3	3	1	7
Local Authority	5	7	1	13
Other	1	1		2
Total	10	17		29

Table 4.12 Change in pupil intake by status

The changes noted by the 17 schools answering ‘yes’, and the reasons suggested for these changes were coded. There was a high level of consistency across responses, both in terms of changes and the suggested reasons for these. As the same factors come up under both parts of the question, these have grouped together. Five categories of response were identified, three of which reflect the view that the pupils are more challenging to work with. Table 4.13 lists the categories and the number of times they were mentioned.

Change/Reason	Number of schools
More complex needs	7
More disturbed, violent or disaffected	7
Drugs, alcohol or mental health issues	7
Policy changes	13
Social factors	8

Table 4.13 Changes in pupil intake and reasons for it

Cross-tabulation of responses with status, primary or secondary and day or residential identified the following trends.

- There were no clear differences between schools of different status.
- Primary schools were the most likely to identify an increase in level of disturbance, violence and/or disaffection.
- Secondary schools were the only ones to mention an increase in drugs, alcohol or mental health issues; but seven of the ten secondary schools who said 'yes' to a change in pupil intake, identified this as a factor.
- Day schools are more likely to identify an increase in levels of disturbance, violence and/or disaffection than other schools.

2.3 What do the schools provide?

This section will present the responses to a number of different questions, all of which provide information on the service the schools provide. This includes their aims, their resources, underlying principles and the educational provision on offer.

Aims

Respondents were asked to select, and rank in order of most important, three from nine statements about the aims of the school. The nine statements on offer had been distilled from statements in the school brochures.

There was broad agreement across status and residential or day, some predictable differences were noted between primary and secondary on aims such as 'prepare for adult life and work' which is more applicable to secondary schools. Overall the following trends were identified.

- 'Helping children reach their full potential' was rated the most important by more than half the respondents, and was by far the most often selected in schools' 'top threes' with only eight schools failing to rate it at all.

- 'Reintegration to mainstream' was not rated by twenty-six of the schools, although two of the three which did rate it scored it as 'most important'.
- 'To provide a supportive environment' was rated by four of the seven primary schools, but only five of the seventeen secondary schools.

Specialist Staff

Question nine asked for details of specialist staff 'bought in' by schools, the categories of psychologist and therapist were given, along with an 'other' option. Job titles given in the 'other' category included trainee social workers, psychiatric nurses, relaxation specialists and music and drama workers. Caution should be exercised when examining the responses to this question as some of the local authority schools indicated that although they did not purchase any additional services themselves, they do have access to a wide range of specialist services through the local authority. Table 4.14 shows the full-time equivalent staff in each category, for schools of each status.

A similar table could be drawn showing the breakdown of additional staff by day, residential and day/residential schools. Such a table would show that all of the social workers, educational social workers, and education welfare officers are employed by day schools. The relatively high number of staff in the 'other' category for the voluntary and local authority sectors compared with the private sector may have more to do with private schools tending to be residential or day/residential (and therefore having residential workers who would do some of the same work but not be counted as school staff) and local authority and voluntary schools tending to be day provision.

	Voluntary (7 schools)	Private (7 schools)	Local Authority (13 schools)	Other (2 schools)
Psychologist	1.6	4.5	0.3	As required
Therapist	0.2	2.0	0.1	0.2
Other	7.1	1.0	20	0.1
No Specialist Staff	1	1	8	0

Table 4.14 Full-time equivalent specialist services

Interventions

Twenty-four of the twenty-nine responses indicated that the principles on which their school is based is best reflected by the statement, ‘They emerge from both the therapeutic and behaviourist traditions.’ This is corroborated by the eclecticism of the interventions used by schools to manage pupil behaviour. As can be seen from Table 4.15, most of the schools use most of the interventions with the exception of a ‘levels’ system of behaviour management and school uniform. One school [response 5], the recently re-opened private primary school with one pupil, did not respond to this question.

Respondents were also asked to rate these on a four point scale from ‘not useful’ to ‘very useful’ for their usefulness in managing pupil behaviour. Giving a numerical value to the range of ratings (not useful = 1, very useful = 4) and calculating a mean score is less than satisfactory as it assumes that the space between each rating is equal (Nachmias and Nachmias 1987). However, in this case, a calculation of mode and median responses is also unhelpful as for all interventions the median and mode are both ‘very useful’. For this reason, and with reservations, mean scores for each intervention were calculated in order to identify any slight differences in rating between interventions. The Key-worker system, structured activity time and liaison with parents and carers were thought to be the most useful, all receiving an average score of over 3.8. School uniform, community meetings and a complaints procedure

were the interventions thought to be of least usefulness in managing pupil behaviour scoring 3.3 or under.

Intervention	Number of schools using intervention	Mean scores for usefulness
Liaison with parents and carers	28	3.89
Sanctions agreed by all staff	28	3.50
Written physical restraint policy	27	3.65
Incentives agreed by all staff	27	3.58
Behaviour management policy	27	3.54
Structured activity time	25	3.83
Key-worker system	25	3.92
Complaints procedure	25	3.29
Extra staff	24	3.83
Community meetings	23	3.26
Behaviour management based on points or tokens	22	3.43
School uniform	13	3.15
Behaviour management system based on levels	11	3.70

Table 4.15 Interventions and their usefulness

2.4 Curriculum

In this section of the questionnaire respondents were asked about the usual teaching group size, and about the use of an alternative curriculum.

Teaching group size

The most usual class size is six pupils. Only three schools, all secondaries, have bigger groups than this.

Alternative curriculum

Question 27 asked ‘Does your school make any provision for an ‘alternative curriculum?’’ Of the twenty-five schools responding to this question, only nine answered ‘yes’. Of these nine, eight are local authority provision (which constitutes

67% of the responding schools in this sector). None of the voluntary or private schools which responded, and one of the two 'other' schools offer this provision. Analysis by primary or secondary and day or residential did not highlight any significant differences, although one respondent commented that, 'I thoroughly endorse the use of an alternative curriculum with, e.g. S3/4, but feel that until then and particularly at the primary stage the 5-14 curriculum guidelines are appropriate, largely speaking' [response 15]

Of the sixteen schools which answered 'no', three went on to comment that they would like to be able to offer an alternative curriculum so but were constrained by HMI; '...must follow 5-14 HMI inspect/report on 5-14 quality indicators' [response 24], '...but HMI don't agree with it at all' [response 20] and '...many benefits...[but]...we have been constrained by authority, SEED and HMI – were inspected in 2001' [response 14]

There was a high degree of consistency across responses in terms of the subjects or activities which schools offered. In particular, Outdoor Education is the most frequently mentioned across both primary and secondary schools, with college links and work experience mentioned by the majority of secondary schools who responded to this question. A large minority of schools also report using a variety of cognitive/thinking skills programmes such as Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment.

The perceived advantages of using an alternative curriculum are also consistent across primary/secondary, day/residential and status. The most commonly mentioned advantage is raising pupils' self-esteem; 'We also need to give the boys activities they can do well at in order that they gain the confidence in themselves to try the activities they feel less able to do' [response 23], and '...major impact on self-esteem and social development' [response 28]. Improving pupil motivation, meeting individual needs and building relationships are all mentioned by three schools. One school noted that 'presenting pupils who have rejected and been rejected by the mainstream structure with a replica, albeit in miniature, of such a system is not always appropriate' [response 4]. This is in direct contrast to 'as far as possible we

try to replicate the curriculum of the mainstream primary school' [response 15].

Finally, a cross-tabulation of provision of an alternative curriculum with responses to question 8 on length of interventions and aims of reintegration was carried out, but showed no significant correlation. It had been thought that schools providing long-term alternatives to mainstream who were not aiming to re-integrate their pupils might be more likely to offer an alternative curriculum, but this appears not to be the case.

Schools were asked if they believed the standard core curriculum to be appropriate for the majority of their pupils. Responses are shown in Table 4.16, two schools did not respond to this question. Almost twice as many (15) either agreed or strongly agreed than disagreed or strongly disagreed (8).

	Response	Number of responses
'The standard core curriculum is appropriate for the majority of the pupils in this school'	STRONGLY AGREE	4
	AGREE	11
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	4
	DISAGREE	6
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	2
	<i>Did not respond</i>	2
	<i>Total</i>	29

Table 4.16 Attitude to standard core curriculum

Question 28 asked about the subjects which schools found most useful in engaging the interest of pupils. A number (nine) of the respondents challenged this question, arguing that it is the skills of the teacher or the delivery which makes the difference, rather than the content. 'It's not the subject it's the way the teacher works with the kids, the skills of the staff' [response 22] is a typical response. Four others pointed out that individual differences between children are significant, e.g., 'Each young person is different some enjoy one subject others enjoy another' [response 18]. This

is supported by the variety of subjects suggested, ranging from the practical through vocational, and social to the traditionally 'academic'.

Finally in this section, schools were asked to identify any structured or certificate courses which they found particularly useful as part of an alternative curriculum. Those mentioned were ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network), NFTE (National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship), IE (Instrumental Enrichment), motor-cycle training award, and water-sport certificate. In addition, two schools noted they found that the Social and Vocational Skills Standard Grade suited their pupils.

2.5 Links with mainstream and re-integration

Aims

Question 8 asked for responses to statements on the length of interventions and aim of re-integration. Results, broken down by primary/secondary, are shown in Figures 4.5 and 4.6. Primary schools are slightly more likely to assert that they offer a short-term intervention with the aim of re-integration, however they are most likely to opt for the neutral option. In contrast, 14 of the 17 secondary schools do not agree that they offer such a service.

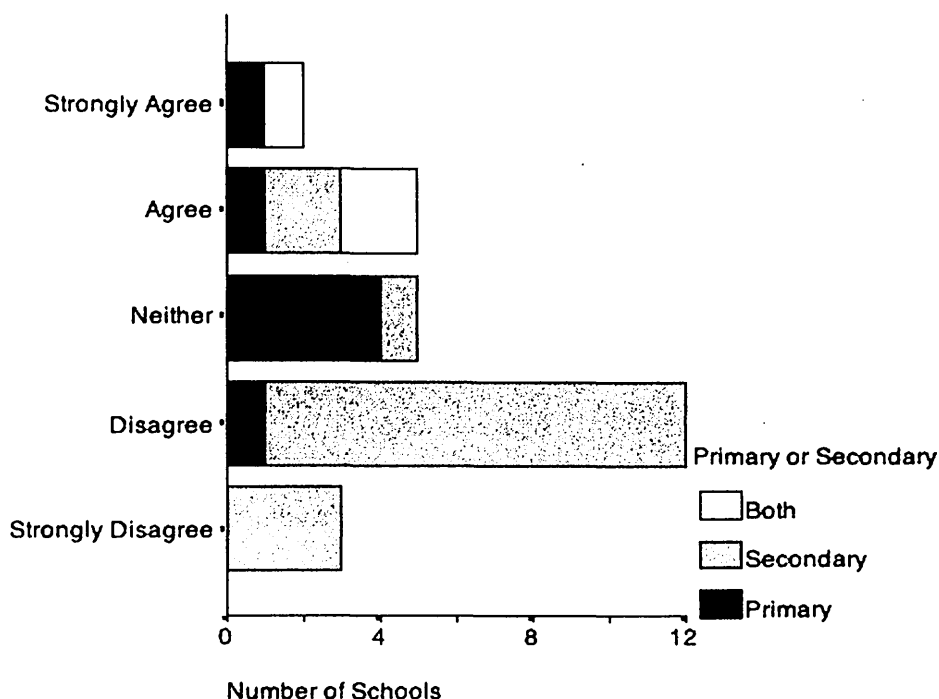


Figure 4.5 Number of schools which aim to provide an 'intervention of less than two years with aim of returning to mainstream', by primary/secondary

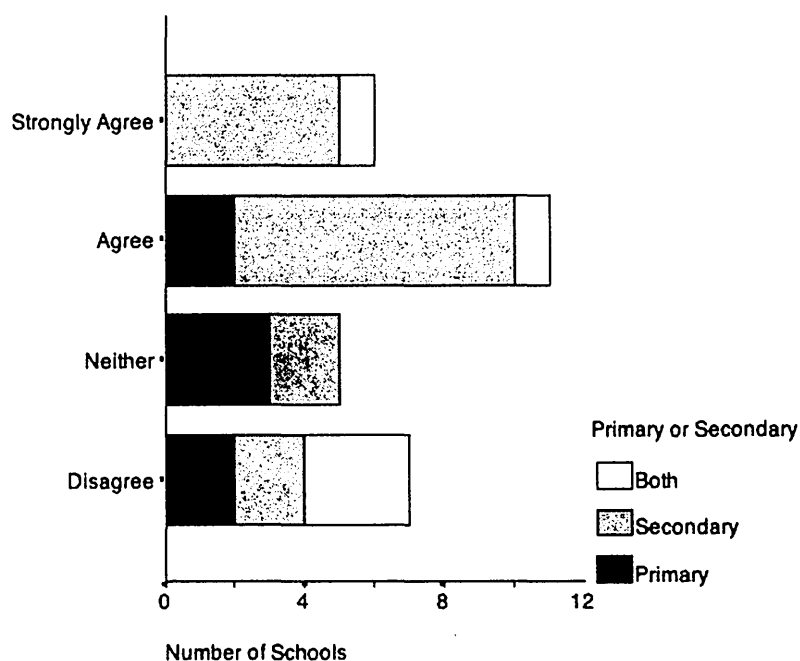


Figure 4.6 Number of schools which aim to provide a 'long-term alternative to mainstream', by primary/secondary

Numbers on roll or attending mainstream

In total, 77 of the pupils in the schools in this survey remain on the roll of a mainstream school. These seventy-seven are distributed across seven schools, with two schools having all their pupils still on a mainstream roll and a third having all but two. Fifty-one of the seventy-seven are in secondary, day, local authority provision.

Question 17 asked about the numbers of pupils who had spent a portion of the previous week in mainstream schools. Total numbers are shown in Table 4.17. Once again the total number of pupils recorded at this question (795) differs slightly from the total given at question 12a (805). This slight discrepancy may arise because some pupils were not in *any* school in the previous week. The number of pupils spending some time in mainstream is 78, close to the figure of 77 pupils who remain on a mainstream school roll. It seems reasonable to suppose that there is some overlap between these two groups, however the extent of this cannot be ascertained from the data collected.

Portion of the week	Number of Children
None	727
Less than one day	14
One day	16
Two or Three Days	18
More than three days	20
Total	795

Table 4.17 Number of pupils attending mainstream school

Re-integration to Mainstream

In total, 82 pupils have been re-integrated from separate provision to mainstream in the last three years. One school is responsible for nineteen of these re-integrations. Once again, school 5 did not respond to this question.

These re-integrations can be broken down by the categories of schools as shown in Table 4.18. To enable comparison, numbers of children being re-integrated from each category will be calculated as a percentage of current population in that category. This percentage figure does not indicate a rate of return to mainstream; it simply allows a comparison to be made between different categories of provision. As this population is unlikely to have remained exactly stable over the last three years this will only serve as a rough guide to proportions of children returning to mainstream.

Category of School	Number of pupils reintegrated	Percentage of current pupil population in this category
Primary	45	26%
Secondary	19	4%
Primary/Secondary	18	12%
Day	43	9%
Residential	7	8%
Day/Residential	32	12%
Local Authority	22	5%
Voluntary	28	16%
Private	19	11%
Other	13	26%

Table 4.18 Schools re-integrating pupils to mainstream

Of the eighty-two returns to mainstream, fifty-two were judged to have been a success or quite successful. When describing a successful re-integration to mainstream the following comments were made.

- There is a need for planning and negotiation between all parties involved with the separate provision offering on-going support.
- A successful re-integration is described as one which is sustainable, it is not just about getting pupils across doors.
- The pupil must be happy and able to cope with the level of re-integration.
- For some pupils a full-time re-integration to mainstream is not suitable.

Links with Mainstream Schools

Schools were asked about the links which they have with mainstream schools. There was some cross-over between formal and informal so the results will be reported together.

Links mentioned could be classified as follows:

- Individual contacts between teachers
- Joint training and CPD
- Meetings related to the reintegration of pupils
- 'System' meetings such as advisory groups
- Social/extra curricular activities
- Classes

There were no identifiable trends in the types or number of links made by different categories of school, except that only local authority schools mentioned links classified as 'system' meetings.

There is little evidence of a 'continuum of provision', what links are reported tend to be between staff rather than pupils, and some schools appear to only have contact with a mainstream school during the re-integration of a particular pupil. There is little evidence of shared placements, additional comments made suggest that most of the pupils spending time in mainstream schools are either in the process of re-integration or are attending college. It may be that if the questionnaire had been sent out in the Summer term more of such placements would have been reported.

2.6 Evaluating effectiveness

Question 32 asked for responses to a number of statements about valid performance indicators. These are shown in Figures 4.6 to 4.11. Some of the criteria were not appropriate for all schools – for example, moving on to further education is not

applicable to primary schools, thus the numbers responding on each question vary. One respondent [response 11] opted to write comments rather than select one of the options. Of the six suggested criteria, opinion was most divided over exclusions and target setting with roughly similar numbers agreeing and disagreeing. There was more consensus on attendance, which was broadly seen as acceptable, and re-integration which was not. Full-time employment and further education were more likely to be rejected; however roughly a quarter of those responding felt both of these to have some validity.

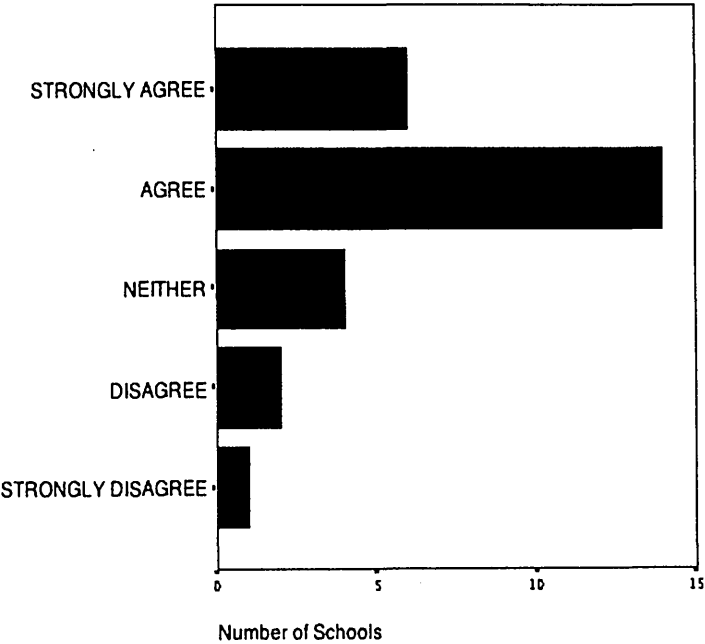


Figure 4.7 Attendance as a valid performance indicator.

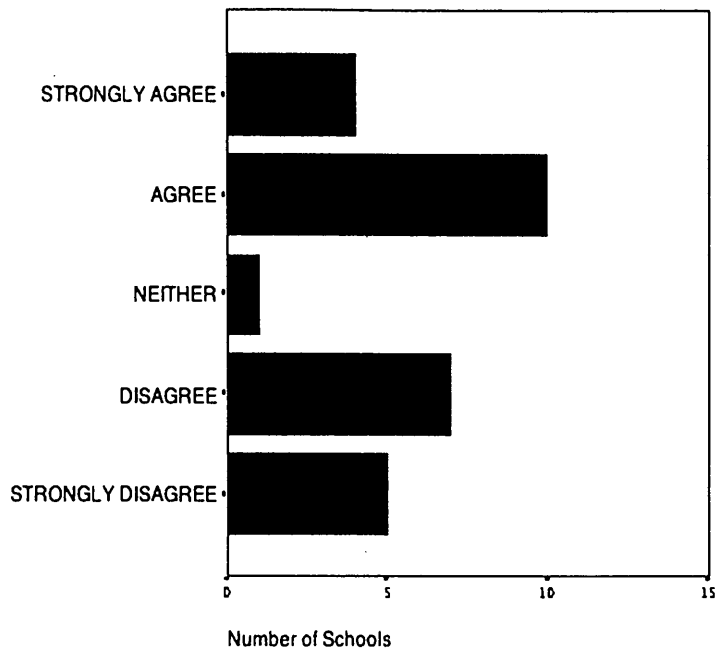


Figure 4.8 Number of exclusions as a valid performance indicator.

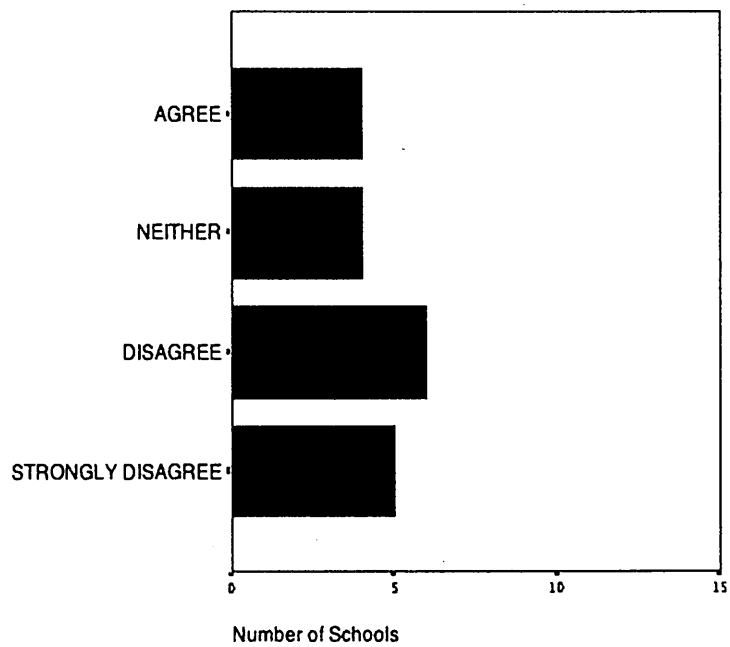


Figure 4.9 Moving on to employment as valid performance indicator.

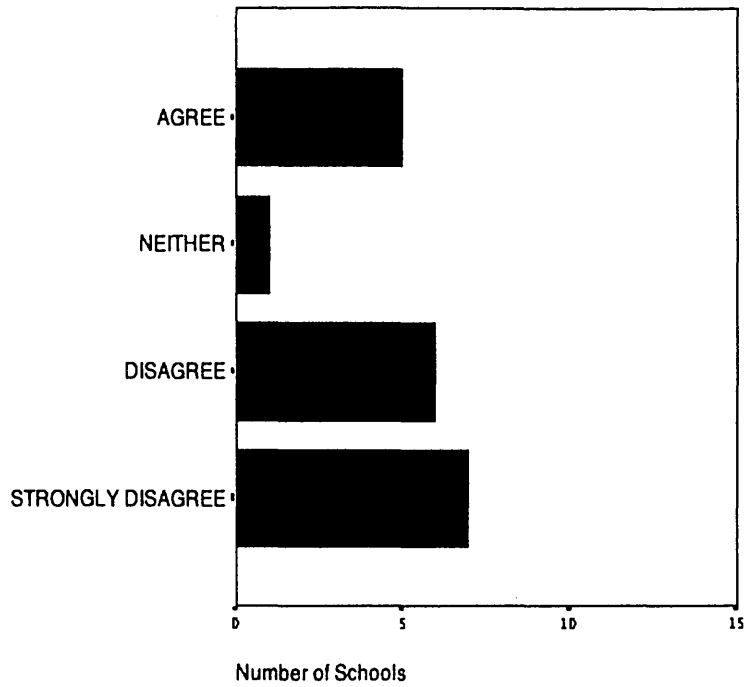


Figure 4.10 Entrance to further education as a valid performance indicator.

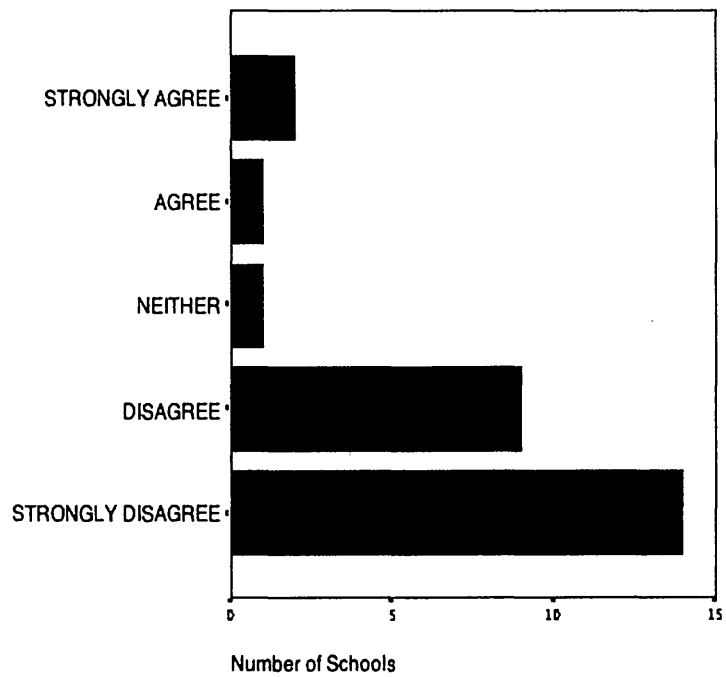


Figure 4.11 Re-integration to mainstream as a valid performance indicator.

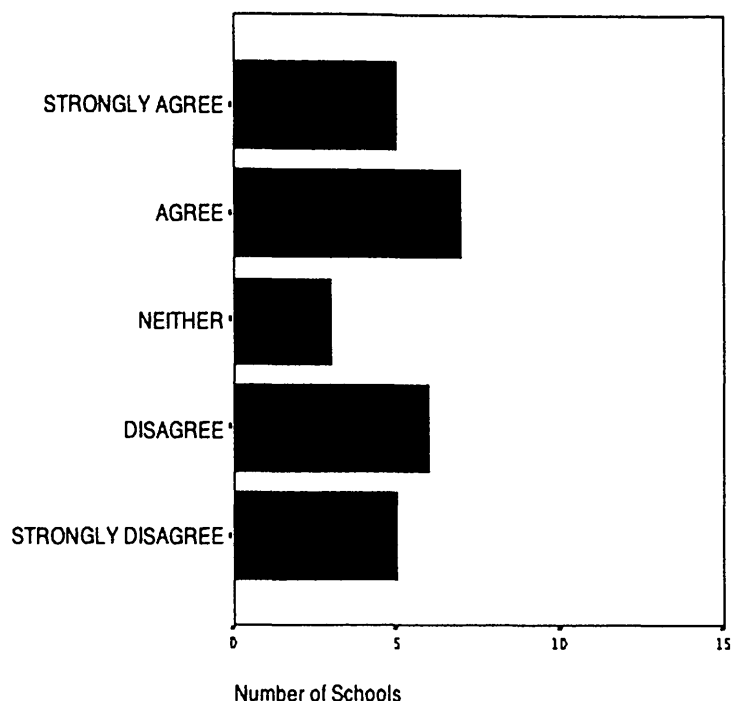


Figure 4.12 Target Setting as valid performance indicator.

Schools were also asked to evaluate the validity of success in SQA assessments as performance indicators for their schools. Key findings from this question were as follows.

- No schools use Higher, Advanced Higher or ‘old’ Higher assessments
- The two most commonly used assessments, 5-14 tests and Standard Grades are the two rated lowest on validity.
- Access 1,2 and 3 and Intermediate 1 are seen as valid or very valid by over 80% of the schools using them
- One school uses Reading Tests which it rates as ‘very valid’.

Four schools mentioned the difficulty in identifying ‘hard’ performance indicators for their school. A typical comment was ‘How do you measure the heart and soul of an institution, the emotion and goodwill felt by former pupils and their families and the emotional investment of pupils and staff?’ [response 10].

Others commented that success is different for each pupil. Some proposed that pupils be asked to evaluate the school. There were some suggested indicators of success, as listed below, however it should be noted that there was no clear consensus with each of these being suggested by only one or two schools.

- Numbers of physical restraints
- Number of children out of class
- Parental support or involvement
- Change in pupil behaviour
- Change in quality of relationships

The 'Map'

The survey was sent to all schools in Scotland which met the criteria for inclusion in the study. The total population of schools is 34, 29 of which responded to the survey. This compares with a sample size of 283 schools in the Cole *et al.* (1998) study of similar provision in England and Wales, which achieved a return rate of 55.1 %. Of the schools in Scotland almost half are run by the local authority (compared with nearly 75% which are 'maintained' in England and Wales) with private and voluntary organisations owning around a quarter each. Twelve schools in Scotland offer residential places, although only one of these schools is local authority provision. All but one of the seven primary schools have fewer than 26 places, however secondary schools tend to be larger, although only two of the 29 schools have more than 46 pupil places. Around 25% of the pupil population are in the primary stage, this mirrors the England and Wales figure of 28% in Key Stage 1 or 2.

There are around 8 times as many boys as girls in separate provision, but girls are more likely to be in residential placements, this compares with a ratio of 10:1 found by Cole *et al.* (1998). While 31% of boys are in residential places, this figure rises to 53% for girls. Pupils in Scotland appear to be slightly less likely (34%) to be in a

residential placement than in England and Wales (40%). Around three quarters of all pupils are said to have a combination of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, with boys more likely than girls to be described as having purely behavioural difficulties. Only seven pupils in separate provision in Scotland are identified as belonging to an ethnic group other than white. Less than 1 in 5 of the pupils live with both parents, around the same number are at school on a 52 week placement. As found by Cole *et al.* (1998), a common perception of respondents is that the severity of the pupils' difficulties is increasing. The level of exclusion from school is very high, with 15 pupils excluded in the week prior to the survey.

The interventions used in the Scottish schools are similar to those found in Cole *et al.* (1998), who use the term 'pragmatic eclecticism' to describe an approach which has elements of both therapeutic and behaviourist traditions. Of the 29 schools in Scotland, 24 report that their underlying principles draw on both of these traditions. Nine of the 29 schools report using an alternative curriculum, this is perhaps slightly more than in England and Wales where there is less flexibility allowed to schools and where Cole *et al.* found a 'general preference for a traditional mainstream type timetable' (1998: 112). Only seven schools in total describe their aim as to provide an intervention of less than two years with a view to returning pupils to mainstream. Secondary schools in particular are much more likely to view their purpose as providing a long-term alternative to mainstream.

Conclusion

This survey, the first of its kind in Scotland, had a response rate of 85%, a figure which I suggests reflects the willingness of people working in this sector to participate in research which is of direct relevance to them. The following chapter will provide an analysis of these responses under the broad themes of 'education', 'ethos', 'measuring effectiveness' and 'social background'. In addition, although it was not one of the original research questions, analysis will also be presented under the heading of 'uncertainty and change', reflecting a strong theme which emerged from the survey.

Chapter 5

Introduction

The questionnaire generated a large amount of data, not all of which will be analysed in detail in this chapter. This chapter will focus on themes which have emerged from an interaction between the data, theory and research questions. These will be presented under the headings of 'uncertainty and change', 'education', 'ethos' 'measuring effectiveness' and 'social background'. Before starting the analysis it should be noted that substantial diversity was found across the 29 schools responding to the questionnaire. Because of this diversity the analysis will talk only in terms of emerging themes rather than of absolute trends.

1. Uncertainty and Change

Between the SOEID publishing the SEN directory in November 1998 and the questionnaire being distributed in September 2002 the following changes had occurred.

- Eight schools, all Local Authority provision, had closed (as a result there was no residential Local Authority provision).
- Two (Local Authority) schools had merged.
- Three schools had remained open but under changed circumstances and names (one changed from Private/Residential to Local Authority/Day provision, another was associated with a residential unit on the same site which had since closed, the third was 'under new management').
- One other school was closed at the time and was making major changes to the provision it offered.

Although the trend was for schools to close completely, or to close their residential provision and increase the amount of day pupils, two schools reported an increase in demand for their residential provision. In addition an entirely new residential primary school opened in 2003 in a Local Authority area in which three schools had been closed in the preceding four years. Six schools reported the opening of new services within their existing provision, these tended to be specialist services, e.g., a 'phobic provision' and 'therapeutic support unit' [response 4], a family support team [response 21], and an outreach support to vulnerable mainstream pupils [response 17].

Alongside these changes in the provision on offer, changes in the pupil intake were also described. All but one of the schools in the voluntary sector reported changes in their pupil intake, whereas for schools in other sectors around half reported changes. There seemed to be a shared perception, among those who said there had been a change, that pupils were now more challenging than in the past, although one respondent noted that 'People always say they are getting harder and more difficult, but basically they are the same' [response 12].

It seems reasonable to suggest that changes in provision and changes in the pupils attending the provision are connected, but the nature of that connection is less obvious. It may be that providing a specialist service results in particular children being referred. Alternatively, a perceived change in the pupils who are being referred could have resulted in new provision being made available to meet their changing needs. However the majority of those who reported variations in the pupil intake attributed this to changes in policy. Policy changes are said to be influencing both what provision is offered (through the closure of local authority schools) and the nature of the children who are referred there (through the maintenance of pupils in mainstream schools). However, it has been noted already that the numbers of pupils in separate provision are not declining, suggesting that there is not a simple relationship between inclusion policy and the nature of pupils referred. Typical of the comments made are: 'More complex, more difficult kids who used to be in residential are coming here – they are more acting out and more violent' [response 1]

and 'Inclusion dogma biased towards mainstream or nothing delays the process of referral to the gross detriment of the children' [response 10].

A reluctance to send children to separate provision, coupled with the expressed desire to maintain children in mainstream, appears to have created a state of uncertainty and flux in the sector. Schools appear to be changing what they offer in order to meet the changing demands of the market. This seems to be particularly true of the seven schools in the voluntary sector, all but one of which report changes in their pupil intake. For schools in the other sectors only around half feel there has been a change. It may be that schools in the voluntary sector are more at the mercy of 'market forces', needing to 'keep numbers up' to ensure their continuity, or alternatively, these schools may be more flexible and able to respond more quickly to changes in demand.

In spite of these policy changes, there is no evidence of a lack of referrals to separate provision. Excluding the school which has only recently re-opened and has an occupancy level of 10%, the mean occupancy levels for schools in the four sectors range from 89.5% (local authority) to 92% (voluntary). Despite this high uptake of places in existing provision the reality is that eight schools have closed in four years and many others have made substantial changes. These factors are seemingly contradictory. Provision is being closed down but there is no shortage of demand for places. There are a number of possible explanations which will be outlined below.

First, it may be that while it is local authorities who make policy decisions and close schools, and while the final decision on the placement of pupils in separate provision is made at authority level, it is individual schools that make the initial referrals. Hogwood and Gunn (1993) discuss some of the barriers to the implementation of policy, including lack of agreement on objectives, lack of compliance, and lack of adequate resources. Whether or not any of these factors are involved in the continuing referral of pupils to separate provision in the face of inclusive policy is a question for another study. However it is easy to speculate that mainstream staff who feel under-resourced to deal with pupils they find 'difficult', or who see their

job as being educating the compliant rather than the reluctant, might resist the implementation of inclusion policy, resulting in a continued demand for places in separate provision from the 'chalk face'.

A second explanation is that a high profile is given (by both politicians and media) to the importance of maintaining school discipline in mainstream schools. This, coupled with political pressure to keep numbers of exclusions down, may be serving to keep the numbers of pupils referred to specialist provision up, with pupils being referred to separate provision as an alternative to exclusion. A third possible factor, highlighted by the discussion of social theory in chapter 3, is the argument that social groups will always identify some sub-groups as 'deviant', although depending on the social theory chosen the mechanism and the sub-groups chosen will vary. If that is indeed the case then schools, like other social groups will have their share of those who are felt not to belong. This would suggest that there will always be a demand for educational placements outwith the mainstream for a small section of the pupil population, quite separate from the actual behaviour of those pupils. Finally, it has been argued (e.g., by Galloway and Goodwin 1987) that such schools will always remain full, their very existence creating a demand for places, a demand which would otherwise not exist.

Whichever explanation is correct, and I would suggest that some combination of all four is the most likely, the impact on separate provision is the same. The sector is subject to contradictory pressures, separate schools are symbols of a segregated system targeted by the inclusion movement, but at the same time demand for places remains high. This has led to some anomalies, for example, some authorities have closed their own specialist provision but continue to send children to separate provision in either the voluntary or private sector. This may be a policy decision, but it also has financial implications: it is much more cost-effective to 'buy in' a place in separate provision on a needs basis than to run a complete service. Thus while schools are closing, at the rate of two a year, those that remain open are running near full capacity. It would be surprising in these circumstances if schools in this sector were not experiencing some insecurity.

2. Education

The questionnaire contained some items relating to two important aspects of the educational provision on offer. The first is the nature of the curriculum, whether an alternative or mainstream curriculum was followed, and attitudes towards it. The second relates to the re-integration of pupils to mainstream schools, whether this was seen as a key aim of the schools and actual numbers of re-integrations achieved.

2.1 Curriculum

The questionnaire included questions on the provision of an 'alternative curriculum'. These were asked because it was thought that experience and expertise in this area could be transferred to mainstream schools which have been encouraged to use flexibility in delivering the curriculum in order to engage the more disaffected pupils (HMIE 2003a). Historically much of separate provision, in particular that in the 'therapeutic community' tradition, used the experience of living and working in a group as the main learning experience (Marchant 1995). This approach was based on the view that the child's emotional well-being needed to be taken care of before any formal learning could take place. This view is still in evidence in the responses of schools which provide an 'alternative curriculum' today.

However the surprising finding was that a relatively small number of schools offer an alternative to the standard formal curriculum. Some of the reluctance to do so seems to be a matter of principle arising from the belief that children in separate provision are entitled to the same as their mainstream counterparts. However three schools reported wanting to be more flexible but feeling constrained by HMI. I found these responses interesting as HMI have stated 'schools already have a clear signal that curriculum flexibility is theirs to use as they see fit to best meet the needs of their pupils. However, whatever curriculum is put in place must stand the same stringent tests of scrutiny and rigour and ensure that pupils are learning meaningful

things well' (personal communication from a SEN inspector). In addition, the pattern of delivery of an 'alternative curriculum' was not consistent across sectors, with all but one of the schools making such provision local authority run. Given the apparent reluctance of many schools to offer an alternative curriculum, the question then arises as to the quality of the standard curriculum which is offered in these schools. From the *Standards and Quality in Special Schools 1998-2002* document (HMIE 2003b) it would appear that schools for pupils with SEBD are found particularly lacking in this area. It is reported that, 'The curriculum had major weaknesses in around 20% of schools for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties' (HMIE 2003b: 9).

The narrowness of the curriculum in some schools with subjects such as Music, Drama and Art being neglected was of particular concern. It is interesting that the schools in this research appear split on the provision of these more expressive subject areas. While many responses talked about subjects with minimal literacy requirements, such as Art, being popular as they enable pupils who have fallen behind in basic skills to succeed; one response from a primary school [response 15] stated that it is the more expressive curriculum areas in which pupils have most difficulty. Other responses indicated that it may be that at the primary stage pupils are less aware of their attainment in comparison with age expectations while by the secondary stage they are more aware of and embarrassed by their own limitations and thus prefer 'non-academic' subjects. Yet for other pupils the lack of a 'correct' answer in creative subjects causes anxiety, as does the demand that such subjects can make on pupils to engage with their learning on a more personal level. What is clear from the questionnaire responses is that simplistic assumptions that practical or non-academic subjects will necessarily be the most successful in engaging disaffected pupils must be resisted.

It would appear that while separate provision is keen to present itself as providing pupils with the same education they would receive in a mainstream school, this is not happening. Whether that is what they should be doing is, of course, a different point. An argument can be made that a narrow curriculum which focuses on basic skills is

what many of these pupils need. Success in the basics can be viewed as 'therapeutic', promoting the pupils' self-esteem and helping them re-engage with education. It is only once this has been achieved that the wider curriculum becomes accessible. While Cole *et al.* (1998) found evidence of this view in the schools they surveyed, none of the schools in this study chose to defend this view. It seems that in the face of criticism from HMI these schools retreat rather than defend their practice, perhaps another consequence of the climate of uncertainty about the future of separate provision.

It should be noted that while the majority of schools deliver what they describe as a mainstream curriculum, there is evidence of the persistence of some of the attitudes more closely associated with defenders of an alternative curriculum. Many of the schools assert that it is not *what* is taught that is important but *how*, and by whom, and that it is in this area that teachers in SEBD schools have great expertise. There is also a view of learning shared by around a third of the schools that it is something which the pupils 'catch' as they are engaged in activities rather than something which is directly taught.

2.2 Re-integration

In an attempt to ascertain what the providers of separate provision consider to be their purpose, schools were given a selection of nine statements of aims and asked to rank their top three. Re-integration to mainstream was the aim which overall was ranked least often, it did not appear in the top three aims of 26 of the 29 schools, although for two schools it was the most important aim. A specific question on the aim of *reintegration to mainstream found that only seven schools stated that they aim to provide interventions of less than two years with the aim of reintegrating pupils while 17 schools aim to provide a longer term alternative to mainstream. The schools are opposed to the use of re-integration as a performance indicator, and given that it is clearly not something that most of them are aiming to do this seems a reasonable position to adopt.*

Looking at the figures on actual numbers of pupils re-integrated as a proportion of pupils in different types of schools, it would appear that pupils are much more likely to return to mainstream schools at the primary stage than at secondary. This figure will be affected by the one primary school which was responsible for 19 of the total of 82 re-integrations. There are a number of factors which could explain the higher rate of re-integration from primary schools. The first is that the planning and negotiation reported as necessary for a successful re-integration may be easier to effect when only one class teacher, rather than a number of subject teachers, is involved. Given the restricted curriculum on offer in much of separate provision, re-integration to mainstream secondary may involve participation in a number of subject lessons in which the pupil has no prior experience. Such a prospect may cause some pupils anxiety, thus reducing their commitment to the proposed re-integration to the extent that it becomes untenable. My own experience of working in primary separate provision would suggest that there is an attitude present among some staff which is supported by the data from the questionnaire, that if a pupil is not re-integrated to mainstream by the end of primary school then they are likely to remain in separate provision for the rest of their school days. This belief results in attempts at re-integration being made in the final year of primary school in order to give pupils a 'last chance' at mainstream education. These 'last chance' attempts at re-integration may account at least in part for the almost 40% of attempted re-integrations which are deemed to have been unsuccessful.

The finding relating to differences between primary and secondary schools were predictable, more surprising is the finding that there is no difference between rates of re-integration from day and residential schools. It might be expected that those pupils in residential provision, and therefore apparently requiring a higher level of support, might find mainstream school more difficult to cope with. As a balance to this, it may be that the stability and routines provided by a residential placement can help some pupils who come from unsettled home backgrounds to access mainstream school; whereas those in day provision who remain in an unsettled family home have less support.

The survey also showed that pupils are more likely to be re-integrated from voluntary, private or 'other' schools than from local authority provision. Once again, this seems counter-intuitive as it would be expected that local authority schools would have closer links with mainstream schools in the same authority. However there was no difference in the number of links reported between schools and mainstream schools when broken down by status, suggesting that even local authority separate provision is isolated. In addition, the schools with voluntary, private or 'other' status are those most subject to market forces, and they may feel the need to attain high levels of re-integration in order to present themselves well in the market-place.

Given the low priority attached to re-integration by the vast majority of the schools, it would be interesting to know if the agencies referring pupils (and indeed parents and the pupils themselves) share similar expectations. The literature would suggest that they do not. Farrell and Tsakalidou (1999), in a study into trends in the re-integration of pupils with SEBD, comment that 'it is possible that these head teachers do not view re-integration as one of the central aims of education in EBD schools...such attitudes, if they exist, run counter to current Government initiatives in this area' (1999: 336). Similarly, in *Choosing with Care* (HMI 1990), regional authorities asserted that their policy was to re-integrate pupils as soon as possible.

3. *Ethos*

This section will examine responses which give some indication of the nature of the ethos of the schools. First those questions which asked directly about the interventions and principles adopted will be looked at, followed by less direct questions relating to exclusions and attendance which also give some insight into the culture of the schools.

In chapter 2 some of the difficulties associated with defining and measuring ethos were discussed. It was suggested that there are 3 dimensions to ethos: social, moral

and cognitive, and that the social is of prime importance in studies of SEBD provision. In particular it was noted that research suggests the nature of the relationship between staff and pupils is crucial in determining ethos in SEBD schools. However, the importance of the 'regime' in these schools in determining whether they were environments in which positive staff-pupil relationships could develop was also noted. Thus the method of control in the schools in the survey, as discussed by Millham *et al.* (1975), will be significant. The rate of exclusion in a school can also be used to give some indication of ethos. Munn, Lloyd and Cullen (2000), in a study of exclusion from mainstream schools found that schools with higher rates of exclusion had more categories of 'unworthy pupils' than did the lower excluding schools. In schools in which some groups of pupils are deemed to be 'unworthy' of help it would appear that the balance between welfare and punitive approaches has leaned towards the punitive, with implications for the quality of staff – pupil relationships.

3.1 Principles and interventions

In response to the question on underlying principles, over 80% of schools recorded that they 'emerge from both the therapeutic and behaviourist traditions'. Cole *et al.* similarly found what they describe as a 'pragmatic eclecticism' being used in working with pupils (1998: 159). There is certainly evidence of a wide range of interventions being used across separate provision. Behaviour management systems based on either points, tokens or levels are used by 83% of schools, this compares with 70% of schools in England and Wales using points or token systems. Only one school did not report using 'sanctions agreed by all staff', this gives a figure of 97% of schools using sanctions, compared with 93% using incentives. In the England and Wales study the findings for both sanctions and interventions were around 80%. However, rather than this being a reflection of a more traditionally 'behaviourist' approach in Scotland, the pattern in Scotland seems to be for most schools to use most interventions. Turning to more traditionally 'therapeutic' interventions, 'good liaison with parents and carers' is used by 97% of the schools. Keyworker systems are used in 86% of the schools, community meetings in 79%. Of all the

interventions listed, only school uniform and levels systems are used in less than 75% of schools.

Although most interventions are used in most schools, there are differences in evaluation of effectiveness. 'liaison with parents and carers' and the Keyworker system are viewed as 'very useful' in managing pupil behaviour by over 90% of the schools that use them. This compares with less than 2/3 of those using sanctions and incentives and just over half of those using a points or token system giving them a 'very useful' rating. This seems to indicate that the more 'therapeutic' approaches are more useful, with the exception of community meetings which has a similar usefulness rating to points/token systems.

It is perhaps then a little surprising that the therapeutic tradition alone was not selected by any of the respondents as the main underlying principal of the school. There may be historical reasons for this, as discussed in chapter one, Bridgeland (1971) examines the experience of the 'pioneer' movement in Scotland and concludes that in general the therapeutic approach was not welcome north of the border. He suggests that there are distinctive features of Scottish culture, particularly the high esteem in which education is held, which make children more likely to be classified as deviant than in need of therapeutic help.

An alternative explanation is that, as Cooper (2001) notes, the therapeutic – particularly psychodynamic – tradition has become associated with a lack of emphasis on educational provision. In addition the tolerance, even encouragement, of 'acting-out' behaviour associated with this tradition has fallen out of favour (Cole *et al.* 1998). I would suggest that the apparent reluctance to identify with the therapeutic tradition may be both evidence of a decline in popularity for this kind of intervention in a 'pure' form, and of separate provision describing itself in the terms which it considers will be found most acceptable by referring agencies.

3.2 Attendance and Exclusion

The data from this survey indicates that separate provision has a similar attendance rate to mainstream schools, despite many pupils being transported to school; and that the rate of exclusions is much higher.

Schools were asked to describe pupil behaviour or characteristics which would lead to permanent exclusion or a refusal to admit. As would be expected from such a diverse provision, different schools tolerate or accept different behaviours. However 18 of the 26 responding schools mentioned violence, and twelve of these qualified it with 'extreme', 'extensive' or 'continual'. A typical response is 'A history of repeated violent attacks on staff and pupils' [response 16]. Other factors which schools mentioned as leading to permanent exclusion or non admittance included psychiatric disorder, drug misuse and the lack of a supportive home base. Two day schools stated that they would not take pupils if their needs would be better met in residential provision, 'i.e. he needed taking away from home' [response 23].

There appears to be an acceptance, or even an expectation, of a level of violence in almost half the schools responding. This is supported by statistics on assaults against local authority school staff. The number of incidences of violence or anti-social behaviour against staff are just below six per 100 pupils in primary and secondary schools, compared with 330 incidences per hundred pupils in special schools (Scottish Executive 2004). It is important to note that these figures relate to all special schools in Scotland and not only those catering for pupils with SEBD. Given the high rates of assaults on staff it is hardly surprising that special schools also have a high rate of exclusions.

The high level of violence and assaults on staff in separate provision may be simply a reflection of the fact that these schools are working with a very narrow section of the population who have exhibited the most disturbed or challenging behaviour. However it may also be that in a number of the schools for pupils with SEBD there may be a residual element of the approach which sees the 'acting out' of internal distress as therapeutic. It may be that in an environment in which there is a tolerance

or expectation of violence pupils who in mainstream settings have controlled any violent impulses no longer feel the need to do so. Other explanations are that new admissions to separate provision see more established pupils being violent and copy their behaviour, pupils in these settings may feel the need to act 'hard' in order to establish themselves in their new peer group.

Although the exclusion of violent pupils is understandable, it does run counter to the view that separate provision is able to 'manage' the pupils who are not manageable in mainstream settings. This in turn raises questions about the experience of pupils in these schools who are apparently learning, and in some cases living, in violent environments.

4. *Measuring Effectiveness*

As discussed in chapter 3, there have been a number of studies which aim to identify good practice in special schools for pupils with SEBD. This is a difficult process as judgments about whether a school is 'effective' or 'good' is not a simple matter of applying objective criteria. Silver (1994) describes the differences which can exist between the populations, purposes and value bases of mainstream schools; this is even more the case with separate provision. For example, Cole *et al.* (1998) chart the development of different approaches to working with pupils including psychodynamic, behavioural, humanist and cognitive-behaviourist. The importance placed on education within these different approaches is seen as a point of tension which continues to divide opinion. What makes a special school effective will depend largely on what it is trying to be effective at. Therefore any discussion of valid performance indicators for separate provision must logically be preceded by an examination of what it is that separate provision is aiming to do.

An examination of the aims which schools identified with reveals that the most popular by a long way was 'to help children reach their full potential' with over half the schools rating it as the most important. This compares with only three schools

rating 'to meet individual educational needs' as the most important. The implication is that whatever potential the schools are helping the pupils reach it isn't purely educational. In addition, as well as being the most popular aim it is also arguably the most difficult to quantify. The reluctance of schools to accept easily quantifiable performance indicators or aims that success can be measured against could indicate a rejection of the accountability culture present in our public services. Alternatively, or perhaps additionally, it could be a reflection of the view expressed in the comments of several respondents to the effect that to a very large extent factors affecting the 'success' of placements lie outwith their control.

Currently special schools for pupils with SEBD are inspected by HMI following the quality indicators laid down in *How Good Is Our School?* (HMIE 2002b) The inspection of separate provision 'largely mirrors that of mainstream primary and secondary schools' (personal communication from HMI). There is particular attention paid to, 'how well pupils with SENs are supported in order to access the curriculum as fully as they can' and to 'the extent to which the school and EA/Governing Body ensures that the terms of SEN Legislation are being met.' (personal communication from HMI) On both these criteria, separate provision for pupils with SEBD does not fare very well. In addition to curriculum weaknesses identified earlier, the report also states 'Many of the weaknesses in implementing special needs legislation were found in schools for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties' (HMIE 2003b). This is confirmed by the very low level of pupils in separate provision who had a record of needs found in this study.

Schools were asked their views on appropriate measures of effectiveness. There was little support for the destination of school leavers to be used as performance indicators; opinion was evenly divided on target setting and exclusions. There was more agreement on attendance which was seen as valid or very valid by 20 schools. It may be that attendance is something which schools feel they have more control over. Apart from the obvious advantage offered by residential provision for boosting attendance, many day pupils in SEBD provision are transported in by taxi with adult

escorts, perhaps making it more difficult for some pupils to choose not to go to school.

Most schools using access level were happy to have success in it used as a performance indicator, but success in 5-14 tests was only thought to have a reasonable degree of validity by just over half the schools using them. A possible explanation for this is that associated with 5-14 tests is an expected age/stage at which a pupil would attain a particular level. Thus the question is not simply 'How many pupils passed?' but 'At what level did they pass and how does this compare with where they 'should' be?' Assessment according to attainment seems to be acceptable as long as it is on an individual basis, but as one respondent noted, 'all Target Setting measures is the ability of teaching staff to set attainable targets' [response 1].

Many comments were made to the effect that any evaluation had to bear in mind the pupils that the schools were dealing with. For example, although the attendance rate in separate provision is similar to that for mainstream schools it may be that the attendance of the pupils who are now in separate provision has improved since they were at mainstream. The request for suggestions of valid indicators did not generate a consistent response, other than the view that what these schools offer is very difficult to measure.

This section began with the observation that before we can evaluate separate provision, we first need to know what it is attempting to do. What emerges from analysis of the questionnaire data is that what the providers of separate provision offer is a highly diverse range of services. As well as being diverse it also seems to run counter to many of the assumptions and expectations of others about what is on offer, for example, re-integration to mainstream. However, rather than communicating in order to reconcile these differing perspectives, separate provision appears to stand back as it is evaluated according to criteria it doesn't recognise as relevant. There is little contact between different providers of separate provision, thus the likelihood of joint action is reduced. In addition, it may be that the climate

of uncertainty over the future of separate provision deters schools from challenging the assumptions of other agencies (including HMI) for fear that they might draw attention to themselves.

5. Social Background

The argument that separate provision functions as a mechanism of social control, removing the ‘undesirable elements’ from the mainstream pupil population was discussed in chapter 3. In this section comparison will be made with the children excluded from mainstream school in order to ascertain if any particular sub-group of those children who are struggling to manage in mainstream are more likely to be successfully referred to separate provision. Whilst an examination of the age, gender, ethnicity, and class of the pupils in separate provision will provide an insight into the population of these schools, it is a big leap from describing a pupil’s profile to saying they are in separate provision because of that profile.

5.1 Age

One quarter of the total pupil population in the schools responding to the questionnaire are of primary school age; around another quarter is in S1 and S2; over 40% is in S3 and S4, and less than 10% is in S5/6. This distribution across the stages differs from the population of pupils excluded from mainstream schools, in which the balance is much more towards secondary pupils, with 85% of exclusions taking place in S1-4 (Scottish Executive 2003d). Unfortunately, direct comparison cannot be made using these figures as the percentages for exclusions are for all exclusions – thus a S3 pupil excluded twice would show up as two S3 pupils. To circumvent that difficulty, numbers of exclusions at primary and secondary level were calculated as percentages of the pupil population of these sectors (as exclusions in both cases could include multiple exclusions this is more of a like for like comparison). By this calculation, a secondary pupil is ten times more likely to be excluded from school than a primary pupil. Comparing similar figures for separate provision (i.e. as a

percentage of total pupil population), a secondary pupil is only four times more likely to be placed in separate provision than a primary pupil.

One interpretation of this difference is that exclusion is being used to remove 'undesirable' elements from school, and this occurs particularly at the secondary stage when schools become more focussed on discrete subjects and exam success. A pupil at primary stage who is exhibiting challenging or troubling behaviour may be more likely to be seen as in need of specialist help, to be 'ill' whereas a secondary pupil with the same behaviour might be seen as deliberately behaving in that way. The primary pupil would therefore be referred for 'help'; the secondary pupil excluded as punishment. In both cases a particular group is being removed from the mainstream. The difference in treatment is a result of different expectations and subjective judgements about what is 'normal' at each stage and the degree of responsibility or control that a pupil can be expected to have. There may also be a view that at the primary stage there is a chance that separate provision may be able to 'turn the child around', whereas by secondary stage they are considered to be 'beyond help'.

5.2 Gender

There are significant differences between the numbers of girls and boys referred, the type of placement they are in, the 'type' of SEBD they are said to have, levels of diagnosis of learning difficulties and ADHD, and proportion who have a record of needs.

There are seven times as many boys in separate provision as there are girls, whereas only four times as many boys are excluded from mainstream schools. There are slightly more girls in residential placements (54) than day placements (47) whereas less than half the number of day boys (487) are residential (217). Girls in separate provision tend to be older than boys, with 75% in S3 or above. This difference is most obvious in the percentage of pupils (of that gender) in S3/4 who are residential; for boys the figure is 14%, for girls it is 35%. Girls are three times as likely as boys

to be said to have 'emotional' difficulties and boys are slightly more than twice as likely to be described as having purely 'behavioural' difficulties. These findings on age and diagnosis differences between the genders match closely those reported in other studies (e.g., Chazan 2000). Finally, girls are much less likely than boys to have been identified as having any of the difficulties in learning listed, which may explain the much lower proportion of girls who have a record of needs.

Girls make up a higher proportion of the excluded population than the separate provision population. There seems to be a reluctance to refer them to separate provision, but once they are referred they are thought to be in need of more intensive treatment. Osler, Street *et al.* (2002), investigating the experiences of girls in mainstream schools, found that often girls experiencing difficulties did not come to the attention of the school staff who tended to respond to the demands of more overtly challenging boys. As a consequence many young women in schools were not receiving an appropriate level of support until their difficulties had escalated, by which time a higher level of intervention by might be thought to be required. The higher use of residential provision implies that there is more often felt to be a need to remove the girl from the home situation. Residential placements are often tied in to 'Supervision Orders' from a Children's Hearing which have a residency requirement. There may also be geographical considerations, as there is less provision available for girls they may have to travel away from home in order to access it. The comparative lack of places for girls may also go some way to explaining the discrepancy between the proportion of girls excluded and those sent to separate provision.

The difference in identification of 'type' of SEBD also fits what would be predicted from the literature in that the 'acting-out behaviour' of girls is more often withdrawn than challenging and thus they are perceived as having emotional difficulties rather than as being disruptive (Galloway and Goodwin 1987). In fact it might have been predicted that more girls would be described in this way, when in fact over three quarters are described as having a combination of Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties with none dominant. Overall, however, the profile of girls in separate

provision matches what would be expected from the literature. That the experience of girls in relation to referral to separate provision differs to that of boys is not in doubt. The reason for this difference is more elusive, while expectations and assumptions may play a large part, there may be other less subjective differences which are also involved, as Chazan notes, 'congenital, constitutional and environmental factors must all be taken into account to explain differences' (2000: 84).

5.3 Poverty

In the absence of reliable indicators of class, estimates of children living in circumstances known to be associated with poverty were asked for. Comparison with the main population is difficult, the data collected by the New Policy Institute is for all children not just those of school age, and figures tend to talk about low income families, which increasingly is comprised of households where adults are in employment but are in low paid jobs (NPI 2002a). I would suggest that taking the families where no adult is in full-time employment as the indicator of low income would therefore give an underestimate of this group in separate provision, which can therefore be (very) conservatively estimated at above 60%. This compares with a Scottish figure of 30% of children living in low-income households (NPI 2002b). The percentage of pupils in separate provision living in single parent families is higher than for the general population. Children living in single parent families are known to be more likely to be living in poverty (NPI 2002b).

It is clear then that a disproportionate number of pupils in separate provision come from families who are *living in poverty*. *This could be used* as evidence of separate provision being used as social control. However, although there can be no doubt that one *effect* of separate provision is that what would previously have been called 'working class' pupils are removed from mainstream schools, it does not necessarily follow that this was the intended *purpose* of separate provision.

The relationship between class and educational inequality is a complex one (Mortimore and Mortimore 1986, Chazan 2000). This data cannot tell us whether working class pupils are in separate provision because they are more likely to be labelled as having SEBD (regardless of their behaviour), and/or because living in poverty has made them more likely to exhibit behaviours which attract the SEBD label. What is certain is that there is a strong connection between social class (or poverty) and placement in separate provision.

5.4 Race

The disproportionate number of children from ethnic minorities, specifically black pupils, who are excluded from mainstream schools is well documented (Tomlinson 2000). However the proportion of Black pupils in separate provision is less clear. Although Cole *et al.* (1998) did not include questions on ethnic origin in their survey, they do report that the impression gained on their visits to schools is that 'the representation of minority ethnic groups in EBD schools across the country is uneven and may have changed in recent years' (1998: 27). Tomlinson (2000) suggests that the high incidence of exclusion of Black pupils is a result of schools quickly getting rid of 'undesirables', 'moving students out of mainstream schooling via special education procedures has always been a lengthy process. In a market situation where desirable customers are required quicker ways of removing the undesirable are needed.' (2000: 28)

It is difficult to make comparisons on the data collected by this survey; over 10% of exclusions from mainstream are of pupils in the category 'not known or divulged' whereas no children from separate provision are in this category. In total there are seven children from an ethnic minority in separate provision, this is less than 1% of the total population. This is a similar figure to the percentage of school exclusions which involve pupils from an ethnic minority. It could be argued that a school recording the ethnic origin of a pupil as 'not known or divulged' would indicate that the pupil could not be easily categorised and therefore is more likely to belong to an ethnic minority group. Including this category, pupils from an ethnic minority

together with 'not known or divulged' make up ten times as big a proportion of the excluded population as the proportion of the population in separate provision. More research would need to be conducted into staff attitudes towards these pupils, but these figures may indicate a tendency to construe ethnic minority pupils as 'bad', and thus requiring exclusion, rather than as in need of help.

5.5 Medicalisation

The number of pupils in separate provision with a diagnosis of ADHD or an identified difficulty in learning is very high, particularly among the boys. Galloway and Goodwin (1987) suggest that boys with learning difficulties are more likely to act out their frustration in a disruptive way, leading to more referrals to separate provision for pupils with SEBD.

The high incidence of ADHD in the population does not tell us whether the pupils are in these schools because they 'have' ADHD, or whether they are there because they have been labelled as having ADHD. Of course, the reality is likely to be that for some pupils the former reason holds, for others the latter, and for yet others some entirely different reason explains their presence. What is known is that a diagnosis of ADHD is not a matter of objective assessment. Jacobsen studied the diagnosis of children in the US and England and reports 'My field notes cite case after case of high-achievement children being off-task and fooling around. Similar behavior in nonachieving children subjects them to the possibility of being labelled ADHD' (2002: 286). The labelling of children as 'suffering' from a medical condition in order to attract specialist resources – including perhaps referral to separate provision – is discussed by Wearmouth (1999). Similarly, Ford, Mongon and Whelan (1982) suggest that medicalisation is one method of removing undesirable pupils from mainstream schools. Thus a diagnosis can be seen either as a positive way of securing appropriate provision or as a weapon of social control, what is common to both of these is that the 'problem' is located firmly within the child.

5.6 Conclusion

Data gathered can only identify types of pupils most likely to be placed in separate provision, it is not possible to move from these findings to stating that pupils are in these schools because of their age, gender, ethnicity or social class. There are some differences between pupils who are in separate provision and those who are excluded but remain in mainstream education. These differences may, in part, be attributable to different types of pupils being seen as in need of 'treatment' whereas others are seen as needing to be punished. It may be that particular groups of pupils do indeed exhibit more disruptive behaviour in mainstream school, in which case different questions then arise as to why this should be the case. Similarly it is not possible to say whether separate provision is being used to meet the needs of those pupils identified as having SEBD, or alternatively the needs of mainstream teachers, the generality of pupils, other professionals or indeed the economy. Such a discussion would require research into the process of referral and the attitudes of those involved.

6. Discussion

The analysis of questionnaire responses not only goes some way to answering the research questions, but also raises other issues which were not predicted, such as the strong sense of insecurity which emerged from the analysis; insecurity which I suggest can be seen as a consequence of the dominance of the 'inclusion agenda'. I argue that this 'insecurity' has led to the development of a defensiveness in the providers of separate provision which has had unforeseen and undesirable consequences as I will discuss below. First, there is a return to the within child deficit notion of SEBD, and second, an apparent reluctance to provide the pupils with the curriculum which is felt to be most appropriate.

The first of these, evidence of the re-emergence of the 'within-child' deficit model of SEBD is coupled with a tendency to 'pathologise' the families from which these pupils come. Seventeen of the schools agreed that their pupil intake had changed over the previous five years. Changes which schools identify in their pupil intake

include pupils who have more complex needs, pupils who are more violent, pupils who are mentally ill or on drugs, and families who are more dysfunctional. In addition, of the 704 boys in separate provision a fifth have a formal diagnosis of ADHD, and almost a quarter have a learning difficulty (some pupils may have both). All of these locate the difficulty within the child or the family. This movement by the providers of separate provision seems to be compounded by a similar trend among the 'customers'. The very high level of diagnosis of ADHD, SpLD, MLD and ASD, particularly among boys suggests that one way of gaining access to separate provision is to acquire a 'diagnosis' (Feiler and Gibson 1999).

In relation to the curriculum, I have suggested that the low level of availability of an alternative curriculum is a consequence of separate provision trying to answer its critics. While local authority provision may be directly affected by decisions to close facilities, other sectors are at risk indirectly from falling referrals. It may be that local authority schools feel more able to be flexible in what they offer as they are not in the 'market place' competing for pupils in the same way as private, voluntary and 'other' schools are. As these, non local authority, schools attempt to make themselves as attractive as possible, they provide the services they think are in demand. Any such school wanting to offer a non-standard curriculum might feel it was too great a marketing risk. The following response describes the consequence of the criticism that the education offered in separate provision came a poor second to that offered to pupils in mainstream schools: 'We used to offer more practical subjects like motor mechanics, joinery and painting, but it was too ad hoc ...we moved more towards formal education to bring ourselves in line with mainstream, our pupils weren't getting what other Young People were getting, but we threw the baby out with the bathwater, it needed to be done at the time but now we need to start to reintroduce it' [response 12]. The question of whether an alternative curriculum is indeed the most appropriate for these pupils is a separate issue, the point is that the schools feel prevented from offering what they believe to be the best curriculum.

It is my view that both the return to the deficit model and the low level of provision of an alternative curriculum are results of the climate of uncertainty and fear in separate provision. I am suggesting that this threat to their existence has put such schools on the defensive. It may be that improvements have been made as a result of this scrutiny, but it is the negative effects which emerge from the data collected.

Conclusion

This questionnaire has provided, for the first time, a 'map' of separate provision for pupils with SEBD in Scotland. It gives information about the management of the schools, their aims and interventions used; it has highlighted the diversity across the available provision; the attitudes towards curriculum and monitoring of effectiveness; and has produced important information on the profile of pupils who are educated there. Some key findings from the questionnaire are as follows:

- Pupils in separate provision and those excluded from mainstream schools share a similar, but not identical, profile. In general terms it would appear that younger children, boys, and boys with a formal diagnosis are proportionately more likely to be referred to SEBD provision.
- There is limited use of an alternative curriculum and some weaknesses in the delivery of the standard curriculum.
- There is little consistency across the provision surveyed in terms of either purpose or preferred method of evaluation.
- Finally, the questionnaire also gives a sense that, at least some of these schools, far from providing a safe haven in which young people can work through their difficulties, may in fact be institutions in which violence is a regular feature of daily life.

I have also argued that the analysis of the questionnaire suggests that the dominance of the inclusion agenda is having serious consequences for how pupils in separate provision are construed and for the education they are offered. The issue of the

impact of the inclusion agenda also arises in the second study which focuses on the experience of pupils and which is reported in the next three chapters.

Chapter 6

Introduction

This chapter will address a number of methodological issues relating to the second study under the headings of research design, method of data collection, ethical considerations and the process of analysis. In each section while reference will be made to the general literature in the area the main focus will be on ways in which this study deviated from what would normally be done, or on issues of particular significance in this research.

1. Research Design

Eliciting the views of pupils on their experience of separate provision has been an aim of this study from the outset. This general aim was given focus through the review of the literature in chapter 2 which identified curriculum, educational experience, school ethos, and stigmatisation as key issues in this area. It was argued that the type of curriculum offered, what is taught, and the qualifications available, could be expected to have an effect on both pupils' sense of separateness and therefore of stigmatisation, as well as on the overall ethos of the school.

Following the review of the literature, and taking into account initial findings from the questionnaire on the variation in types of provision offered, the following research questions were identified.

- How does the curriculum on offer relate to the pupils' perceptions of the ethos of the school, in particular their views on behaviour management and relationships?
- Is there evidence of either stigma or re-signification in the pupils, and does this vary according to the type of curriculum they are offered?

- How do pupils describe the differences in their educational experience in mainstream and separate provision? What are their views on the type of curriculum they are offered and how this relates to their mainstream experience?

1.1 Case study design

In order to investigate these research questions interviews with pupils were carried out in two schools which were selected on the grounds of the difference between them in terms of the curriculum on offer and their similarities on other measures. A discussion of issues relating to the interviews can be found in section 3 of this chapter. This research design, of a comparison between two schools, belongs broadly in the category of 'comparative case study'. The word 'broadly' is used to highlight that this research would not be considered a case study by some theorists. Indeed, case study design is the subject of much debate, the key issues, which will be discussed below, are:

- What is a case?
- Is it a method or an approach to research?
- How generalisable are the findings?

Cases are variously described as 'bounded systems' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000), 'selected examples of a social entity' (Hakim 1994), and 'an instance in action' (Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis 1976). The latter two descriptions indicate that 'a case' implies 'a case of something', that is, it belongs to a general category which in turn implies that some generalisations are already being made (Gomm, Hammersley and Foster 2000). A case can then be taken to be a bounded system which is one instance of a class of similar bounded systems. But what counts as a bounded system? Stake (1995) asserts that a case is 'a specific, a complex, functioning thing'. He goes on to argue that in the social sciences a case, will usually be 'purposive', and it will be an integrated system, 'Thus people and programs clearly are prospective cases. Events and processes fit the definition less well' (1995: 2). Alternatively, Yin (1994) gives example of case studies which

clearly have events as their subject, for example the cover-up of the Watergate scandal.

It would appear that case study research can perhaps be best conceived of as an umbrella term encompassing a range of different definitions. On this view much of the debate could be seen as a matter of individual preference. It could be argued that, whatever the subject of the enquiry is, what is important is not whether it is a process or a program but that the boundaries of it are clearly established at the outset of the study.

Yin (1994) argues that case study research cannot simply be taken as any research which is conducted on a case, no matter how well defined it is, but that the defining features of case study lie in the approach to research rather than in a single method. Key features for Yin are that it must be a study of a contemporary phenomena in context, and that multiple sources of evidence are used. Similarly, Robson asserts, 'the expectation is that a *range* of techniques is used in a case study' (1993: 157) [*italics in original*], and Hakim writes 'Case studies are typically based on two or more methods of data collection' (1994:63). The use of a range of methods allows the researcher to build up a rich picture of the case being studied. Lincoln and Guba (2000) argue that such a 'thick description' is needed to allow readers to make up their own mind as to the extent to which findings are transferable to other cases.

By the above criteria, this research does not represent a case study approach. It may be more helpful to think of this research as a 'case within a case' – that is, the experience of pupils within the two schools. The focus of the research questions was the pupils' experience and consequently it was interviews with pupils which were the main source of data. While other data was collected, principally from field notes, this does not, and was not intended to, represent a 'thick description'. Rather this ancillary data was used primarily as a means of checking the validity of my analysis.

Perhaps the most serious accusation to be levelled at case study research is that findings are not generalisable to the wider population (Gomm, Hammersley and

Foster 2000). Defenders of case study research have taken different approaches to responding to this accusation. The first argues that generalisability is not important, the second that careful sampling can lead to statistical generalisations being possible, and the third, that the type of generalisability possible with case study research is different. These defenses will now be examined in turn.

The first response asserts that generalisability is not an issue for this type of research. For example, Stake (2000) suggests that some cases may be studied because of their intrinsic interest, with no intention of generalising to the rest of the class to which they belong. Lincoln and Guba (2000) suggest, as an alternative to generalisability, that if a 'thick' enough description is given then a judgement can be made about the degree of similarity between two particulars, and whether there is enough 'fittingness' to allow a hypothesis to be transferred from one particular to another. Where a number of particulars are studied and similarities noted, then the reader may begin to make naturalistic generalisations (Stake 2000).

The notion of generalisability has its origins in quantitative methods of research in which sampling is used to ensure representativeness and the second defence argues that case study research can adopt such an approach. Nachmias and Nachmias (1987) discuss the range of possible sampling techniques. Using statistical inference, the findings from one case can be inferred to apply to all cases if the sample can be shown to have been adequately selected. It is important that if non-probability sampling is used, there is evidence presented as to the representativeness of the sample. However there is a problem with sampling in case study research. Because case study researchers are often interested in diverse populations (and as the questionnaire results demonstrate this is true of special schools for children with SEBD), the extent to which a small number of cases could be said to be representative of the total population is seriously limited (Gomm, Hammersley and Foster 2000).

The third response to the accusation of lack of generalisability is suggested by Yin (1994) who writes, 'A fatal flaw in doing case studies is to conceive of statistical

generalization as the method of generalizing the results of the case' (1994: 31). He argues instead for the use of 'analytic generalization' where an existing theory is 'tested' against empirical evidence from more than one case study. Yin limits this type of generalization to research designs involving multiple cases and the prior development of theory. Mitchell agrees that statistical generalisation has no place in case study research, rather, external validity depends 'upon the plausibility or upon the logicity' (2000: 175) of the theoretical reasoning. Unlike Yin he does not insist upon the necessity of comparisons between cases, but agrees that case studies must be 'embedded in an appropriate theoretical framework' (Mitchell 2000: 183). For both these writers, the typicality of a case does not depend upon the representativeness of the population as a whole, rather the selected case should be typical in relevant characteristics. Thus, as the aspects of a case which are to be studied, or theorised about, change, so will which cases can be seen as typical. Put simply, generalisability in this model is 'up' to existing theory, rather than 'across' to other cases.

Of these approaches to generalisation it is the final one which seems most appropriate for the particular research questions I have in mind. I am particularly interested in the experience of children and have in mind a number of 'theoretical lenses' (existing literature on curriculum and ethos, and symbolic interactionism) through which to examine the data I collect. The aim of this study is not to make claims about the experiences of all pupils in separate provision on the basis of interviews with some pupils in two schools. Rather the intention is to seek to identify the particular experiences of a small number of pupils and to analyse these in the light of our current understanding. It is to be hoped that in so doing new insights may emerge which shed light on our understanding of factors affecting the experiences of pupils in separate provision.

1.2 Selection of schools

Bechhofer and Paterson (2000) argue that 'designing a piece of empirical research requires the researcher to decide on the best ways of collecting data in research

locales which will permit meaningful and insightful comparisons' (2000: 2). They further argue that along with comparison, control is a fundamental requirement of good research which enables the researcher to have confidence in the conclusions drawn from their data. At the outset of this research it was thought that the curriculum on offer would make a difference to the experiences of pupils, their feelings of being different, and to school ethos. In order to investigate this, keeping in mind the requirements of comparison and control it was decided to select two schools which offered different curricula but were similar in as many other respects as possible.

It seems reasonable to suppose that whether a pupil attends separate provision as a day pupil or on a residential basis will be a major determinant of their experience, in particular in relation to their feelings of belonging to their 'home' community. For that reason it was important to select schools which had a similar profile in terms of day or residential. It could also be predicted that the experience of primary and secondary age pupils would be different, particularly in relation to curriculum issues. Therefore comparison should be made either between two primary or between two secondary provisions. From the questionnaire data and literature (e.g. Lloyd and O'Regan 2000, Riddell 1996, Crozier and Anstiss 1995) it is also apparent that gender is a significant factor in determining a pupil's career through the separate provision system. Thus any comparison between schools would need to take account of whether they are co-educational or single-sex resources. In practice it was decided to record as 'co-educational' those schools which *currently* had both male and female pupils. Finally, it was decided to identify two schools from the same sector, as some differences between sectors had emerged from the questionnaire analysis.

All schools which responded to the questionnaire were categorised according to the type of curriculum they offered, whether they were day or residential or both, co-educational or single sex; primary or secondary or both, and their sector. As issues of curriculum flexibility become more pointed at the secondary stage it was decided to focus only on secondary provision. Eliminating primary schools and those which

did not respond to the question regarding alternative curriculum, seventeen school remained (see Table 6.1).

Looking first at those schools offering an alternative curriculum, School 25 could not be selected on two counts. First I had worked there in the recent past and was concerned that this might have consequences for my data collection. Second, although described as both primary and secondary it is largely primary provision which occasionally, and not as a matter of course, allow pupils to continue there after P7 while awaiting transfer to their long-term secondary provision.

All the remaining schools offering an alternative curriculum were in the local authority sector, and therefore the comparison school needed also to be a local authority one – either school 27 or school 14. In the light of information given during discussions with the staff at that school at the time the questionnaire was sent it was decided it would be inappropriate to approach school 27. School 14 was therefore selected. In order to have a good comparison a school with a similar profile (day, co-educational, secondary, local authority) but which provided an alternative curriculum was required.

From the five schools which meet the selection criteria, 3,6,7,22 and 29, school 6 was selected. This was the first school to respond to the questionnaire, and this had been returned along with an invitation to visit. This was followed-up by a phone call from the deputy head expressing interest in the research. In the absence of other criteria, and in the presence of enthusiasm about the research it was decided to approach this school.

School	Alternative (A) or mainstream (M) curriculum	Day (D), residential (R) or both (B)	Secondary (S) or both (B)	Co-educational (COED) or single sex (SS)	Local authority (LA), other (O), private (P) or voluntary (V)
3	A	D	S	COED	LA
6	A	D	S	COED	LA
7	A	D	S	COED	LA
19	A	B	B	SS	LA
22	A	D	S	COED	LA
23	A	D	B	SS	LA
25	A	B	B	COED	O
29	A	D	S	COED	LA
9	M	D	S	SS	V
10	M	R	B	SS	P
12	M	B	S	SS	V
13	M	R	S	SS	O
14	M	D	S	COED	LA
16	M	D	S	SS	P
21	M	B	B	SS	V
26	M	B	S	COED	P
27	M	D	S	COED	LA

Table 6.1 Secondary schools in which curriculum on offer is reported

The head teacher / deputy head of the schools were contacted directly in the first instance and both were pleased to offer their schools as locations for the study. Formal procedures for requesting access through the relevant local authorities were then pursued and permission was granted. Introductory meetings were arranged between myself and the senior staff member in each school at which, amongst other things, the research timetable and issues of consent were discussed. Thus school 6 and school 14 were selected, for the remainder of this study school 6 will be referred to as 'Burnside' and school 14 as 'Hawthornbank'. Their similarities and differences will now be explored in more depth.

1.3 Characteristics of the selected schools

Schools and their local authorities

Hawthornbank is in an urban local authority whereas Burnside's local authority is more mixed. Both schools fit into a wider system of provision for pupils who are educated outwith the mainstream. In both cases these wider systems have experienced a high degree of change over recent years.

Hawthornbank caters for two distinct groups, there are up to 30 places for pupils in S1 and S2, and for 24 pupils in the last 6 months of statutory schooling. Until recently it had been planned that Hawthornbank would close. In light of this many of the staff had made arrangements to leave the school, however the changes were not able to go ahead as planned and have been delayed by at least two years. The school has remained open but some of the staff went ahead with their plans to leave, while others have been asked to stay when they had been expecting to take early retirement. Hawthornbank is a traditional Victorian school building which was originally a mainstream primary school. It is located in a largely residential area of a major city on a main road.

Burnside caters for 'around' 30 pupils, and offers a range of interventions ranging from home tutoring to full-time placements. Most pupils are in S3 or S4, but there are some in S1 and S2. Burnside is part of a continually evolving system of provision, it was built and opened around 25 years ago as a residential centre with an educational facility, but changed to a day school in the late 1990's. The school is part of the authority's Behaviour Support Service which offers a 'mixed economy of provision' and which aims to be flexible and responsive to individual needs¹. The history of the building means that the classroom accommodation was purpose-built for small classes, and there is accommodation for break and lunch times in the old residential wings. Burnside is located in a residential area of a 'new town'.

¹ As described in school handbook

Curriculum

In response to the questionnaire item regarding alternative curriculum, Hawthornbank replied that it does not offer an alternative curriculum but would like to. The head teacher reported feeling constrained from doing so by HMI and the Local Authority. The Hawthornbank school handbook states that 'As in other schools, the curriculum [for pupils in S1 and S2] follows as far as possible the guidelines for pupils aged 5-14'. The school had recently made changes to the structure of their curriculum in response to an Inspection report from 2001 in which the structure of the curriculum was described as 'fair'. There were concerns raised about the breadth of the curriculum on offer and the length of the school day. Until August 2002 pupils were based in one classroom throughout the day and followed a traditional primary school model. Since August 2002 the pupils had been moving around the school between classes and had different teachers for most subjects. The school planned to make further changes to curriculum organisation in the academic year beginning August 2003 and to extend the school day. In June 2002 pupils were receiving lessons in English, Maths, Italian, Environmental Studies (including Science), RME, PSD, Home Economics, PE and Outdoor Education, and Art. In addition two afternoons a week were for 'options', with a choice of sports, fabric craft, art/craft or snooker.

Burnside offers an alternative curriculum in the form of Outdoor Pursuits, Community Education, Options Afternoons and Club Afternoon. Burnside, like Hawthornbank had undergone a recent inspection, and like Hawthornbank the structure of the curriculum was judged to be 'fair'. There was some concern about gaps in the curriculum, notably music/drama and science. In addition to the elements of the alternative curriculum, pupils at Burnside follow a curriculum based on 5-14 guidelines in S1 and S2, and in S3 and S4 are able to take Standard Grades or units at Access or Intermediate level. At the time of the interviews the pupils were taking classes in English, Maths, Social subjects, Art, Home economics, Technical, PE, and Outdoor Pursuits (including watersports). The range of National Qualification units available at S3 and S4 was praised by HMIE, as was the success of the activities and options programmes in engaging the young people with learning and in their

community. The summary of the report states that although some elements, including the curriculum, were found only to be ‘fair’ they were improving steadily.

Pupils

Although both schools had both male and female pupils, at the time of the study there were no girls available to be interviewed in Burnside, all being away on college placements, work experience or having recently left school. The pupils in Hawthornbank at the time of the study were more likely to be in S1/2, whereas those in Burnside were S2/3. More of the pupils in Burnside had more recent experience of mainstream schools than those in Hawthornbank, some of whom had been educated outwith the mainstream system since middle primary.

Table 6.2 summarises key similarities and differences between the schools.

Burnside	Hawthornbank
Local authority	Local authority
Co-educational	Co-educational
Day	Day
Secondary	Secondary
Local authority SEBD provision ‘evolving’	Local authority reviewing SEBD provision
Residential area	Residential area
30 places in S1 - 4	30 places S1-2
Mainstream and alternative curriculum	Mainstream curriculum
Purpose-built building	Victorian building
Mixed authority	Urban authority

Table 6.2 Similarities and differences between schools

Finally it should be noted that, unsurprisingly given the ‘small world’ of separate provision in Scotland I had some links with both these schools. I had worked as a residential care worker in Burnside 10 years earlier, when it was in a different stage of its evolution. At that time teaching and care staff were entirely separate, however two members of the current teaching staff remained from my time working there. I had also previously taught in two primary SEBD schools in the same local authority as Hawthornbank and had pupils who had moved on to there for their secondary

education. Although none of the current Hawthornbank pupils were known to me, I talked with members of staff about pupils we had both worked with. In addition a visiting specialist teacher at the school was a former colleague from yet another school. I would argue that these links were distant enough and similar enough in both cases so as not to compromise the research. However they were certainly useful in gaining access and establishing credibility with the 'gate-keepers' in both cases. In initial conversations with both head teachers comments were made such as 'you'll know what to expect'. It seemed to me that knowing I had experience of working in these kinds of settings made the schools feel more comfortable in allowing me access. This may have been based on assumptions that as an 'insider' I would be less critical or more understanding about what I saw. Perhaps it resulted from a sense that the behaviour of the pupils would not come as a surprise to me, or maybe there was a confidence that I would know how to speak with the pupils in an appropriate way. I didn't make any claims to these things and didn't question what assumptions were being made, but simply felt that access was agreed more quickly and straightforwardly than might otherwise have been the case.

2 Method of Data Collection

An initial visit was made to both schools which included a meeting with the head or deputy head to explain the purpose of the research and to discuss issues of consent, selection of pupils, and how the study would be reported. Consent will be discussed more fully in the section on ethics below.

The actual sample of pupils which was obtained in each school was a result of a combination of what was ideal with what was possible. Both schools were asked to identify 10 pupils in the hope that if some dropped out an actual sample size of between six and eight in each school would be obtained. As with the selection of schools, obtaining a representative sample which would enable generalisations to be made to the rest of the school population was not an aim of this study. However, some guidance was given as to the target population, in order that a range of

experiences would be elicited. Schools were asked to, as far as possible, identify a group of pupils who had spent varying amounts of time in separate provision, in particular to include any recent arrivals from mainstream. Where possible S3 or S4 pupils were to be preferred as they would have experience of the post 5-14 curriculum. Finally, schools were asked for both boys and girls.

In practice, the timing of the study, towards the end of the school year, meant that the available pupil population was very limited. Many pupils had left; others were on college placements or work experience. At Hawthornbank, given the small pupil population at the time (eleven), it was decided to approach all pupils rather than make a selection. At Burnside there was a greater degree of selection which was controlled by the deputy head. It was clear during our conversation about identifying pupils that he was trying to think of those pupils who he thought would be most 'helpful' to me, those who would talk and answer my questions. I did re-emphasise that what would be most useful to me was a range of pupils, and at that point other names were added to the list but I was warned I 'might not get anything out of them'. This seems to me to be a typical example of the delicate balance which researchers must strike when in the field. On one hand is the need to be mindful of the fact that you are there as a guest of the organisation and are likely to be inconveniencing them by your presence, on the other is the need to ensure that the research is not compromised as a result of lack of clarity about what is required.

The characteristics of the pupils who were interviewed will be described in detail in chapter 7; Table 6.3 provides a summary of their characteristics for comparison.

	Year	Previous placement	Earliest special school	Additional learning needs	Time at school	Family in separate provision
Burnside						
<i>Arteta</i>	3	Support unit (secondary)	P3	Learning difficulties	2 years	Step-Dad and cousins
<i>Barry</i>	4	Mainstream secondary	S1	ADHD	2 years	
<i>Caimbeul</i>	3	Mainstream secondary	P3		1 year	
<i>RS50000 (male)</i>	3	Support unit (secondary)	P3	Under assessment	6 months	Dad and cousins
<i>Robert</i>	3	Support unit (secondary)	S2		1 month	
<i>Scott</i>	4	Mainstream secondary	S2	Dyslexia	1 year, 3 months	
<i>Steve</i>	3	Mainstream secondary	S2	ADHD assessment	3 months	'whole family'
Hawthornbank						
<i>Alex (male)</i>	3	Special primary	P5		1 year	
<i>Emma</i>	2	Mainstream secondary	S1	ADHD assessment	5 months	
<i>Hayley</i>	2	Special primary	P5	ADHD	1 year	
<i>Jacky (male)</i>	2	Mainstream primary	S1		1 year	Older brother
<i>Jamie</i>	3	Mainstream secondary	S2		4 months	
<i>Larsson</i>	2	Special primary	P3	ADHD	1 year	
<i>Marie</i>	2	Mainstream primary	S1	Learning and motor difficulties	1 year	

Table 6.3: Key characteristics of pupils

There were seven pupils interviewed in each school, two of the eleven at Hawthornbank declined to participate and a further two were unavailable due to exclusion or absence. To some extent the desired range was achieved, in particular there was a good range of long-stay and recent arrivals in both schools. Most

disappointing was the lack of girls available to be interviewed in Burnside, although three of the seven pupils at Hawthornbank were girls.

2.1 Interviews with young people

Individual interviews with pupils were selected as the most appropriate method for collecting data on their perceptions of their school experience. Group interviews have been found to have some advantages, such as allowing children to build on each other's comments and extend their ideas (Lewis 1992). However individual interviews are often selected as the most appropriate for an older age group such as in this research (Mahon *et al.* 1996). Other methods of data collection have been successfully used in research with children, for example the use of visual stimuli to start discussion. These can either be the children's own drawings (Pridmore and Bendelow 1995), or photographs taken by the researcher (Prosser 1992) or by the young people (Schratz and Steiner-Löffler 1998). In a small pilot study for this research the use of digital photography as a stimulus for discussion was trialed, however the young people found the novelty of the equipment very distracting and this had a negative impact on the amount and quality of data generated.

As Patton (1990) notes: 'the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in someone else's mind' (1990: 278); data which is not open to observation. There is a range of ways of conceptualising the interview process suggested in the literature. Maykut and Morehouse (1994) and Kvale (1996) suggest that 'an interview is a conversation which has a structure and a purpose' (Kvale 1996; p6). However others, e.g., Bechhofer and Paterson (2000) are concerned to point out the ways in which interviews can be seen as different from general conversation. Construing interviews as simple conversation can give the impression that it is something that anyone can do without much thought or preparation. A brief summary of the main issues relating to interviews will demonstrate that this is by no means the case, and that in fact a large number of considerations should be thought about in advance. In the following discussion the focus will be on those issues which are most pertinent to the specific context of an adult interviewing young people.

Two considerations present in the form of dilemmas, that is choices to be made in which neither option is ideal. The first dilemma is the issue of who has control of the agenda. Powney and Watts (1987) suggest that interviews in educational research tend to take the form of either 'respondent' or 'informant'. In the former the interviewee simply answers the interviewer's pre-set questions, whereas in the latter they are viewed more as the expert who will have an input into decisions about what is on the agenda. This latter approach is that favoured by Cooper and McIntyre (1996) who discuss the difficulties of getting the balance between treating pupils as experts and handing them control of the agenda whilst ensuring that issues of interest to the researchers are also covered. In practice, in this study it was decided to use an interview guide, as opposed to a more detailed schedule (Patton 1990, Robson 2002). The intention was to create a structure flexible enough for the young people to feel able to talk about issues of importance to them, whilst keeping a check that pre determined areas of interest were being addressed.

This notion of Cooper and McIntyre's (1996) of overtly following the pupils' agenda, whilst having a hidden agenda of ones own chimes with Fontana and Frey's (1994) comments on the hierarchical nature of the interview relationship and relates to the second dilemma, establishing trust and rapport. Creating a good rapport is clearly essential if interviewees are to open up and talk about their opinions, experiences, and to share their understandings. Fontana and Frey (1994) suggest that interviewers can be tempted to engage in a ruse, to deliberately present as subordinate in order to gain the respondent's trust. The dilemma is that in order to develop the relationship of trust it seems that the interviewer may need to be disingenuous. This may involve, for example, feigning interest in topics raised by the interviewee, thus if a rapport is reached it is more likely to be contrived than genuine.

These issues of trust and rapport are further complicated when there are big differences in characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity and class between interviewer and interviewees. In this study the interviews took place in schools and

were conducted by an interviewer with a professional background in teaching. I made the decision that it would be foolhardy to attempt to disguise either my own background or that I had a particular agenda. I hoped that by being transparent with the pupils about who I was, what I wanted to know, and why, any anxieties or suspicions would be reduced. The underlying assumption at work is that honesty is a necessary (though by no means sufficient) requirement for genuine trust.

Closely related to the issue of developing trust is the extent to which an interview can or should be seen as 'therapeutic', and the way in which the interviewer chooses to present themselves. Cooper and McIntyre (1996) report that they found a Rogerian approach to interviewing helpful, that is one which adopts the principles of unconditional positive regard, empathy and congruence. Cooper has argued elsewhere (1993a) that an interview can be a therapeutic experience; however, some commentators have stressed the differences between clinical and research purposes (Robson 2002) and others have argued that the interviewer should be neither a judge nor a therapist (Patton 1990). I would agree with Patton, and want to draw a distinction here between an interviewee who finds the interview process therapeutic, and an interviewer who sets out with this intention in mind. Whilst I would consider the former a happy accident I would argue that the latter would be inappropriate for the reasons which will be outlined below.

This is perhaps a particular concern when working with pupils who have been identified as having SEBD in terms of their understanding and expectation of the research interview. Mahon, Glendinning, Clarke and Craig (1966: p151) comment 'It is crucial to mark the boundary between research and therapy very clearly' whilst Alderson (1999) notes 'Some degree of mutual respect and trust is essential for any honest communication' (1999: 57). I find it easy to agree with both of these views, which is not, in general, a problematic stance to take. However it could be argued that for this group of children whose experience of adults may be of sustained and prolonged disappointment (at the very least), to enter into a relationship of trust with an adult is extremely therapeutic and may be the primary aim of years of professional intervention. In other words to aim for the type of relationship Alderson demands of

an interview runs counter to Mahon *et al.*'s rule of demarcation. This is not the only concern however, as for some of these young people the difficulty may lie in the opposite direction, with establishing appropriate boundaries and needing help to set appropriate limits in relationships. They may, in effect, be too eager to share and may hold unrealistic expectations of what the interviewer can offer. Great care must therefore be exercised to ensure that the relationship between researcher and young person is clearly defined and understood by all. Of course, none of these concerns are unique to this group of young people, however it would be an irresponsible researcher who failed to take account of these possibilities. Bearing in mind that many of the pupils I interviewed would be familiar with interviews with adults conducted in a 'therapeutic' model I felt it was important to establish clearly at the outset of each interview the limitations of my involvement with them. It was important therefore to be clear that we would be meeting only once, and that should any issues arise during the interview which they wanted to discuss further that they were able to identify a suitable adult to talk with.

2.2 Presentation of interviewer

Fontana and Frey (1994) discuss the choices an interviewer must make as to how they present themselves: as a friend and potential confidant, as a learner, or perhaps as an academic. However, the respondent's perception of the interviewer will have as much to do with prior experience and assumptions as with what the interviewer has intended. As Bechhofer and Paterson (2000) note, the interviewer may seek to manipulate visual cues such as clothing, but not all interviewees will respond in the same way to these cues. In addition, there will be some cues, such as age, gender and ethnicity which will be difficult to disguise. It should be noted that while much is made of the power differential between adult researcher and young person (e.g. Mahon *et al.* 1996, Hill, Laybourn and Borland 1996, Hood, Kelley and Mayall 1996) I would argue that, in particular when working with pupils with SEBD, assumptions should not be made about how children perceive the power relationship between themselves and adults. It will be the case that some young people will have experience of being very powerful within relationships with adults.

I have already stated that I did not seek to disguise my status as a white, middle-class, female former teacher. However I would argue that young people are at least as aware as adults, and perhaps more so, that teachers are not a homogenous group, and that therefore they would be alert to individual characteristics as well as status signs. Over the course of ten years working with pupils in SEBD units and schools I have developed a particular value base which informs my interactions with them. The fundamental principles of which are respect for young people and a belief that they have something interesting to say. In addition I would argue that this professional experience brought certain advantages to the interviews. Firstly, I have an easy manner when talking to young people, secondly I am familiar with the distinction between casual conversation and instrumental interviews, and finally I believe that my respect for young people is something which they pick up on very quickly. In summary, any difficulties posed by my personal characteristics would be, at least, balanced by the nature of my interactions. In this respect the approach I took was similar to that of Cooper and McIntyre, 'in short the researcher strove to combine ease of manner, trustworthiness and approachability with the presentation of an image of being of a status worthy of the informants' time and effort' (1996: 32).

Despite my attempts, concerns must remain about the extent to which the interviewees may have felt I had particular expectations of them and responded accordingly – either deliberately to confound these, or to confirm them. Mahon *et al.* (1996) comment that, 'A key issue in researching children is the extent to which the researcher is seen as some kind of expert – with the risk that 'public' accounts will be given that are thought to be acceptable to the 'expert' point of view of the researcher' (1996: 149). A further concern is that children may make up stories, although as Morrow and Richards (1996) are keen to point out, the ability to make up stories, the inability to differentiate truth from lies, and the tendency to repeat what's been heard as 'fact' are not the preserve of children alone. There is no easy solution to this issue, as Cooper and McIntyre (1996) note when asking about individual's perceptions it is difficult to establish hard and fast criteria for truthfulness. However

they go on to argue that there are some markers which can be used to judge authenticity. These include the amount of detail given; whether a story has internal consistency; the offering of unexpected answers and whether the interviewee is able to reject suggestions made by the interviewer (Cooper and McIntyre 1996). In addition, as will be shown in subsequent chapters, the reports of the pupils of their school experiences were supported by other sources of data: field notes (discussed below), and HMI reports.

2.3 Process of Interviews

The format which the interviews took is typical of what has been termed the 'classic interview' (Bechhofer and Paterson 2000), that is there was one interviewer and one interviewee meeting at a pre-arranged time for the specific purpose of the interview. The standard approach to conducting an interview was adopted (e.g., Patton 1990, Anderson 1998, Robson 2002). In summary: interviews began with largely descriptive questions; open questions were asked and probes were used for detail, clarification or elaboration; assurances were given that what was being said was interesting; summarising was used both to clarify and to pace the interview, and illustrative examples were given where appropriate to indicate that I had 'pretty much heard it all' (Patton 1990: 317).

An interview guide (see Appendix E) was used which listed broad areas of interest and possible probes. All interviews covered all of the 'big headings' apart from two at Hawthornbank which were ended early at the pupils' request. The order in which areas were covered varied, although all started with the same general introduction.

In Burnside, depending on availability, I was either given use of the 'conference room', which pupils would generally be familiar with from attending review meetings, or a former staff smoking room usually off limits to pupils. At Hawthornbank all the interviews took place in a large disused classroom. None of these locations was ideal as all would have associations for the pupils, however no more suitable accommodation was available. All interviews were conducted on a 1:1

basis, although one teacher at Burnside who accompanied a boy to the start of the interview, seemed reluctant to leave. The teacher later explained that he had been unsure about how the pupil would behave as he had been 'unsettled' that morning; in fact the boy was attentive, helpful and polite throughout the interview which lasted 40 minutes. One interview at Hawthornbank was interrupted by another pupil coming into the room, followed by two staff, and refusing to leave.

The conduct of the pupils during the interviews was markedly different between the two schools. There was little eye-contact from any of the Hawthornbank pupils who were generally restless and fidgety throughout. The boys from Hawthornbank gave very limited answers and tended to 'sprawl' to take up maximum space, in contrast the girls were all very 'chatty'. Three of the seven Hawthornbank pupils got out of their seat and wandered around the room during the interview. Only one pupil from this school used any kind of social greeting such as 'good morning'. One of the Burnside pupils was obviously very lethargic, he made little eye-contact, gave limited answers and sat with his head in his hands. All of the others made good eye-contact, seemed eager to please, were talkative, sat upright and used a range of social greetings. Some of the Burnside boys thanked me for talking to them and one shook my hand. These differences in behaviour between the two pupil groups will be discussed further in the following chapter.

2.4 Field notes

In this study observation was not chosen as the main method of gathering data. Had it been, then detailed and systematic making of field notes would have been indicated (Patton 1990). However, the collecting of some contextual data seemed important and therefore at the start of the study I decided to make summary notes of contact with the schools. These notes were made either during my visits (in the case of pre-arranged meetings with senior staff) or immediately after.

Despite the field notes not being as systematic as would have been expected had they formed a larger part of the data gathering, the general procedures for making them

were adhered to (Patton 1990). Notes were made on the following: behaviour of pupils in interviews; behaviour of pupils around the school; direct quotes from pupils; quotes from staff, both during informal chats and from observation, and my own impressions - both feelings and initial insights. At Hawthornbank I had the opportunity to meet with two workers attached for a short time to the school. The agreement with these workers was that our conversation was entirely confidential, therefore no data will be presented from this meeting, other than the observation that their views tended to support the interpretation of the other data gathered, and as such contribute to confidence in the 'face validity' of the analysis.

Clearly I did not record everything that was observed or heard, only that which seemed significant to me at the time. Therefore the claims which can be made on the basis of these notes alone is limited, however they have been useful in providing a check against which data from other sources can be evaluated.

The use of such field notes does raise ethical issues. The senior member of staff in each school had given permission for me carry out the research in the school. Although consent was gained from the senior staff and from the pupils who were interviewed, other members of staff were simply informed that I would be there. I do not know if any staff objected to my presence, and whether they would have had an opportunity to voice this objection. The ethical consideration is made more acute because some of the data collected in this way could be said to reflect badly on some staff members. In choosing to use this data my decision has been informed first by the knowledge that all staff were aware of my presence and that I was carrying out research; my visits were noted in the daily diaries of both schools and on weekly timetables displayed on the wall of the staff rooms. Second, all data reported was 'public' in the sense that no confidential conversations have been reported and no covert observations were made. Third, I have taken care to ensure no individuals are identifiable, and finally I believe the data is important in building up an account of the schools which is well supported by evidence.

3 Ethics²

Ethical considerations have relevance at all stages of the research process – planning, execution and reporting. There are a number of ethical concerns referred to in the literature and these tend to fall into the broad categories of informed consent, confidentiality and consideration of the potential risk to participants (e.g. Mahon *et al.* 1996, Patton 1990, Anderson 1998, David, Edwards and Alldred 2001).

Gaining access to a group of children usually involves negotiating a series of ‘gate-keepers’ from local authority down to class teacher. Hood *et al.* (1996) describe the process of gaining access to primary school children and some of the difficulties they encountered. Primarily they had to justify the ‘usefulness’ of their research, and its lack of threat to participants. Morrow and Richards (1996: 94) note, ‘in the UK consent is usually taken to mean consent from parents or those in ‘*loco parentis*’, and in this respect children are to a large extent seen as their parents’ property devoid of the right to say no to research’. If adults make decisions for children there are two dangers, one is that a child might feel unable to say that they don’t wish to be involved, the other is that a child who does want to participate is denied the right to do so.

As Hill *et al.* (1996) report, common practice when seeking to interview children is for Education Departments and head teachers to give their consent and then send letters to parents asking for them to opt out if they do not want their child to participate. The procedure in this study was no exception. In discussion with the senior member of staff in both schools a range of issues relating to consent were discussed. These focussed on whether parents should be asked for consent on behalf of pupils, if consent should be ‘opt in’ or ‘opt out’, and if the request should be made directly by myself or by the school. In both schools local protocols were followed which resulted in the schools sending out letters asking parents to reply if they wished their son or daughter not to participate.

² The BERA ethical guidelines were consulted and adhered to in the course of this study

As always research in the real world is a matter of negotiation, and whilst I was not entirely happy with this compromise, I believe the most important consent to be that of the interviewee and I was able to have much more control over how this was sought. A number of strategies were used including: a clear statement of the purpose of the research; information about what would happen to the data collected; control of the recording equipment given to young person, and regular checks throughout the interview that the young person was happy to continue. Given the possible implications of my status as an adult conducting research in a school I felt it was important that the young people be given an easy way to opt out of the research. To this end as part of the preamble to all interviews I asked the pupils what lesson they were missing to talk to me. Whatever they said I made a comment to the effect that I had really enjoyed that subject at school, or that it sounded interesting and asked if they would rather go back to class to carry on and I could always see them another time if they wanted, however none of them took this opportunity. Whilst these safeguards will not have guaranteed that truly informed consent was reached, I was reassured by the following:

- some pupils asked further questions about the research
- two said they did not want to take part
- two ended their interviews early
- two asked not to be recorded
- two were happy to be recorded but turned the microphone off when they wanted to say something off the record (and back on again afterwards)

These factors seem to me to indicate that for some of the pupils at least I had been successful in conveying the optional nature of the interviews, and that there would not be any negative repercussions should they choose to opt out.

The second ethical issue is that of confidentiality and anonymity. It is standard for researchers to give guarantees of anonymity, that is to assure participants that they will not be identified. In addition it is not uncommon for assurances of 'local' confidentiality to be given. In other words, the researcher undertakes not to share

any data with others in the research environment such as teachers, parents, or other pupils, although it will be shared anonymously with a wider audience. Grimshaw and Berridge (1994) discuss the particular dilemma faced by researchers working with children. They found that the guarantees of confidentiality which are generally accepted as a normal part of research were not acceptable to the schools to which they wanted to gain access. The concern focused on the possibility that as researchers they may observe practice or receive statements from children that raised child protection concerns. Similarly, Mahon, *et al.* (1966) note the emerging consensus that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed to children. In practice ways of implementing this would vary depending upon factors such as the age, cognitive level and the perceived likelihood of such issues arising. In some cases (e.g., young children, low risk) it would be appropriate to deal with such issues as and when they arise whilst in others (e.g., older and higher risk) an initial statement would seem more suitable.

Given that the young people interviewed for this study were all of secondary school age and that for some there would be ongoing child protection concerns which they might raise during an interview, I chose to make a short initial statement to all interviewees. They were told that what they said to me would be reported anonymously and not discussed with anyone else in the school, but that if they started to tell me about something which made me think they were being harmed in any way I would stop them and discuss with them the most appropriate adult for them to share the information with. This was agreed in advance with both schools and fitted in with their own child protection guidelines. In practice no such issue arose, and introducing the possibility that it might didn't appear to surprise or unduly affect any of the pupils.

The final ethical principal relates to the notion of 'do no harm'. This has relevance to both data collection and reporting stages. I was concerned that the interviews might prompt pupils to talk about unhappy experiences. Before conducting any interviews I asked school staff to identify someone who would be available to support any pupil who became distressed. Two young people did talk about being

very unhappy and seemed subdued at times during their interviews. With both these young people I reflected to them that they seemed to be unhappy or upset and asked if they had anyone they were able to talk to about their feelings. In both cases they identified adults outside school who they would talk to, and I commented that I knew Mr/Mrs X [the adult identified by the schools] was available if they wanted to see someone sooner.

In terms of the data reporting stage it has become clear that some of my analysis does not reflect favourably on certain aspects of one of the schools. It has been very important therefore to ensure that the schools are not identifiable and that the anonymity of pupils and staff is protected.

4. Analysis

Patton (1990) suggests that the 'challenge [of qualitative data analysis] is to make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify significant patterns, and construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal' (Patton 1990: 371-2). However as Kvale (1996) notes, there is no one way of analysing interview data; Jones (1985) too describes qualitative data analysis as a highly personal experience with no one right way of doing it. In analysing the data from the interviews in this study no one standard procedure was followed, although the process was informed by Miles and Huberman (1994), in particular their 'tactics for generating meaning' and 'tactics for testing or confirming findings'. In addition the constant comparative method, as described by Strauss and Corbin (1994) proved useful in generating categories within the broader topic areas that were pre-determined by the research focus. The process which was followed in practice will now be outlined.

All the interviews which were recorded were transcribed verbatim. The two which were not recorded were written up in detail on the basis of extensive notes taken at the time of the interview; in both cases this was done on the same day as the

interview was carried out. In the first instance I decided to take a cross-case rather than case approach (Patton 1990) to the analysis, looking at the transcripts in school groups. The decision to look at the emerging themes within each school group was informed by the early realisation that within each school pupils tended to say similar things but that the two groups reported quite different experiences.

The tapes were listened to and the transcripts read over many times and initial impressions were noted. All transcripts were first coded according to the broad area being talked about: 1 = stigma/resignification, 2A = educational experience, 2B = curriculum, 3 = ethos and MISC = other. Each transcript was edited to be in a unique font and then the 'cut and paste' command was used to form five topic documents for each school, which included everything the pupils in that school said relating to each broad category. Any piece of data which covered more than one key area was put into each relevant topic document. These units of meaning (Maykut and Morehouse 1994) were then compared and arranged under emerging categories. Each new piece of data was compared with existing categories and either placed alongside similar pieces of data or used to start a new category. Categories were coded, up to 20 within each topic area. The categories under each topic area are summarised in Appendix F

At this point I returned to the original complete transcripts, made duplicate copies with a 2 inch margin down one side and in the margin wrote the appropriate code. For example, [2A,5] indicated topic area 2A –'educational experience', category 5 'better work'. In Scott's transcript this code appears alongside the following excerpt:

G: So is the work different here?

S: *Aye it's better I'll say it helps you better because in mainstream like do you think really that they'll dae like poems like ... have you heard of the poem kid in the bin?*

G: Yeh

- S: *We get to do that in English and everything and I never heard of that til I came here*
- G: Ok so what you seem to be saying is that the work here is kind of more suited to you, more relevant?
- S: *Aye*
- G: And is that in English just or...
- S: *In maths again it's a lot better like in mainstream they just pick the work and tell you to dae it but we've got like a sheet and everything we dae it we've got to tick off a sheet and that's us passed one level of work like we've to do 10 sheets like*
- G: Right.

This process was initially carried out without reference to the topic documents, later comparison provided a means of cross checking categorisation. As a consequence some categories were assimilated whilst other new categories emerged. Grids were then created for each of the main topic areas (five in total for each school) which had the names of the seven pupils from that school across the top, and the categories down the side. Some boxes on the grid were simply ticked if a topic had been discussed, but where necessary a more detailed account of what the pupil said was entered. An example of a blank grid is contained in Appendix G.

The next stage was to examine carefully those categories which emerged in one school but not the other, and to re-read all transcripts with a view to identifying missed units of meaning. This resulted in some categories being added to some of the grids and notes being made about any clear differences between categories in each school.

The grids were used as the basis for making more notes on identifying patterns in responses which emerged within each school, as well as for identifying the 'outliers' (Miles and Huberman 1994). These notes, together with earlier notes and initial impressions were then used as the basis for 'reconstructing a recognisable reality' (Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 122) through the process of selection and

interpretation. At this stage the original tapes were listened to again in order to pick up on any missed data, nuances, and to check the emerging interpretation.

The analysis then proceeded on three different levels; alongside the cross-case analysis within each school emerging patterns of similarities and differences between schools were also identified. These were noted along with relevant supplementary data from field notes. Finally a case analysis was carried out for each individual interview with a view to summarising the key themes in a form readable by the interviewees. A short (between one and three page) summary of this analysis was sent to each pupil along with a covering letter thanking them for their help, and asking them to get in touch with me if I had misrepresented their views, none of them chose to do so. An example of an interview summary and covering letter to the pupil can be found in Appendix H.

5. Validity and reliability

Throughout the preceding chapter on methodology and a later chapter on analysis concerns with reliability and validity are embedded in the more general discussion, however it is appropriate to also make some explicit comments referring to my position these issues.

The notions of reliability and validity have their origins in positivism (Altheide and Johnson 1994, Robson 2002). Much of the debate in qualitative research concerns the extent to which these are appropriate criteria to be applying to research which is interpretative in nature. One solution has been to abandon any attempts to evidence *reliability and validity, arguing that the strength of qualitative research* lies in its focus on the particular and subjective experience (Pring 2000). Others have chosen to redefine the terms, preferring instead to deal with notions of ‘credibility’, ‘transferability’, ‘dependability’ and ‘confirmability’ (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Robson (2002) notes that his own view on the matter has changed over time, having at first followed the Lincoln and Guba (1985) argument he now has sympathy with

the position that to claim that qualitative research is neither reliable nor valid begs the question then why do it?

Whilst I would not want to reject the importance of the notions of reliability and validity in qualitative research it is clear that they must be in a form which takes account of the nature of the research being carried out. Both data collection and data analysis should be open to examination in relation to these criteria. Whilst reliability refers principally to replicability, the accuracy of recording and coding and the consistency with which it is done, validity is an issue of the trustworthiness of the data and analysis presented. A key strategy for increasing confidence in the data and analysis on both these measures is to make the processes gone through, both technical and intellectual, as transparent as possible (Robson 2002). Other measures (Miles and Huberman 1994) include ensuring that all data is considered, not simply that which supports a particular interpretation; considering alternative interpretations or explanations for the emerging findings; seeking corroborating evidence – either in the same data source or another; and seeking informal feedback to check ‘face validity’.

All of these strategies have been implemented in this study. This is not to claim complete reliability or that I have uncovered the ‘truth’ of the young peoples’ experience, simply that measures were taken to maximise the extent to which the analysis presented is based on an interpretation of data which was accurately recorded and rigorously categorised. In addition the picture drawn of the experiences of these young people, as they chose to describe them to me, is the end product of a clearly outlined reasoning process. No claims are made as to the representativeness of the experiences of these pupils either of the pupils in their school or of pupils in SEBD provision in general. However it is claimed that the examination of common themes which were identified in each pupil group, examined in the light of existing literature, contribute to our knowledge and understanding of the experiences of these pupils.

Chapter 7

Introduction

In this chapter data will be presented from interviews with pupils, along with additional observations drawn from contemporaneous field notes. Each school will be reported separately, starting with Burnside. Contextual information on the schools and brief impressions of the pupils will be followed by a thematic presentation of data organised according to the main themes of the Research Questions: educational experience - including curriculum, ethos and stigma.

1. Burnside – First impressions

These are taken from field notes made after the initial and subsequent visits to interview pupils; where my impressions are corroborated by comments in HMI Inspection Reports this is noted. Burnside was inspected in 2002.

The entrance to the school is regulated by a buzzer and intercom, opening into a reception hall. Photographs of previous pupils and examples of pupils' art work are on the wall. The central hall is also used as a display area for work from each class, notices and photographs of current pupils. The recent inspection report describes the classrooms as 'bright and well-furnished' (p 3). The atmosphere is welcoming and the initial impressions are of a *caring and industrious* school.

At the time of the visits the school was quiet during class time with transition times between class and break being noisier. The Inspectors observed that 'At all stages, most pupils performed well on tasks set by their teachers where they were able to co-operate in managing their behaviour' (p. 5). Teachers collected their classes from the central hall before each lesson, a system which seems to help the young people

get to where they should be going with minimal fuss. I observed pupils being trusted to walk around the school on errands, for example to show the head teacher pieces of work or to take messages; all the pupils managed this without difficulty.

The units, where support staff are based, are comfortable and welcoming – having previously been the living/dining rooms of residential units. These were singled out for praise by the inspection team and credited with having ‘helped establish a strong sense of belonging and community’ (p 2). All interactions observed between adults and young people seemed to be friendly, non-confrontational and relaxed. This included a conversation initiated by a pupil with the head teacher about a grievance with a class teacher. The inspectors noted that ‘Staff treated pupils with respect and helped them form positive relationships’ (p 12).

A table summarising the key characteristics of the pupils was given in chapter 5. The following additional notes on the pupils are presented in two paragraphs per pupil. The information in the first paragraph comes from the pupils themselves unless otherwise noted. The second paragraph gives an account of my impression of the pupils. The pseudonyms were chosen by the pupils, some of the more unusual ones can be traced to ‘Old Firm’ players at the time.

Arteta is in S3¹, he is 14 and has been at Burnside for 2 years. He has a long history of placements in various support units and special schools starting with a residential placement in P3. Arteta came to Burnside from a support unit attached to a mainstream school and had a brief placement back in mainstream last year, the aim is for him to return to mainstream after the summer. His step-father had been at Burnside when it was a residential home and some cousins have been at the school.

Arteta has the typical tall and gangling physique of a teenager and seemed to be not quite at home in his body. Throughout the entire interview his voice ranged from a

¹ Interviews took place in June at the end of the school year, it is now customary for pupils to ‘go up a year’ in the month prior to the Summer vacation. Thus a pupil recorded as being in S3 will actually be towards the end of their second year in Secondary school.

high pitched squeaking to a low growl; unsure of whether this was a novel attention seeking-device or an unfortunate developmental stage I decided that discretion was the better part of valour and chose to ignore it. I get the sense that Arteta would struggle in most schools both with the academic demands but more importantly with peer relationships. It came as no surprise that he talked about having been bullied.

Barry is 14 and in S4, he has been at Burnside since first year when he came from a mainstream Secondary school. The school tells me that Barry has SQA Access Level 3 passes in Basic Cookery; English: Language and Literacy; Using Maths 1, and HE: Safe Hygienic Practices. When I asked Barry about certificates or qualifications he said he thought he had something for cooking. He lives with his Mum, and has two big brothers and a big sister who have left home and a younger brother and sister who live elsewhere. Barry has been diagnosed as having ADHD and is on medication; staff report that he is often lethargic as a result.

Barry is a tall, well built young man with a mop of dark hair. At the beginning of the interview he confined himself largely to one-word answers, and gave the impression that even that was a bit of a chore. He appeared to be 'absent' for some of the time. As the interview progressed Barry became slightly more talkative, particularly on the subject of school dinners and when recounting stories of his exploits at mainstream school. His interview is peppered with little laughs, giving the impression that he thought some of my questions were daft, but he was too polite to say. Barry appeared to be very comfortable at Burnside, he seems to like the easy life and he gives the impression that that is what he thinks he has got.

Caimbeul is 14 years old and in S3. He has been at Burnside since the end of second year, and is currently on a joint placement with an off-campus unit elsewhere in the authority. He was at a special school from P3 to P7 when he returned to mainstream.

Caimbeul is a good-looking and well-presented young man. He was confident, relaxed and very articulate, he was quite adult in his manner - shaking hands on

introduction and making jokes. Caimbeul used phrases such as 'official SQA examiner' which suggested he had a higher degree of awareness of curriculum issues than many of his peers. I got the impression that Caimbeul had thought about some of the issues before, in particular how being at Burnside will affect him. Explaining his placement he said he was getting bullied at mainstream and retaliated, he thinks it was easier for the school to get rid of him than all the others. Caimbeul believes that if he'd been at a different mainstream school he might not have ended up at Burnside.

RS5000 is 13 and in S3. The name he chose for himself is a make of car. Before coming to Burnside he was at the off-campus support unit next door. This is his fourth placement in two years, having also been at two mainstream schools. RS5000 was first in trouble in Primary 2 when he was excluded for throwing his shoe at the teacher. At the end of primary he was on a part-time time-table in a support centre. RS50000 went from there to a mainstream secondary full-time but had a 'behaviour support person' with him in every class; he didn't find this helpful. His cousin was at Burnside and his Dad attended another residential school in the area.

RS5000 is small for his age; he has black hair in a crew cut and a round face covered in freckles. Some of the teaching staff were concerned about RS5000's ability to 'manage' the interview, he had recently been very unsettled and was just back in school after an exclusion. Throughout the interview his behaviour was appropriate and he seemed eager to co-operate, perhaps even a little intense. However when he went back into class he was unsettled and disruptive. RS5000 seemed aware that his behaviour was at times challenging and he expressed sympathy for the teachers saying "I dinnae ken how they can cope".

Robert is in S3, he is 13 and he has been at the school for about a month. Like RS50000 he attended the off-campus unit between mainstream and Burnside. He stays with his Mum and Dad in the local town and has ambitions to train to be a vet through the army.

Robert is slim and dark; of all the boys I interviewed at Burnside he seemed the most cautious. He is the only one of the Burnside boys to say the behaviour of the pupils there is worse than at mainstream, and overall he gives the impression of being aware of where he is and the consequences of that. He is concerned about the little amount of schoolwork he is doing now, and about how being at Burnside may affect the way in which others see him.

Scott has been at Burnside for a year and five months. He is has just turned 15 and is in S4. Scott was previously at a mainstream secondary school. He has SQA Access 3 units in Basic Cookery Skills, English (language and literacy), Social Subjects: Organising and Presenting Information and Using Maths 1,2 and 3.

Scott is small with unkempt blond hair and a very earnest gaze. He was the only one of the Burnside pupils who asked about the details of the research project, why I had chosen that school and what would happen to the information he gave. He asked for the tape to be turned off at one point when he talked about a sensitive issue. Scott could work as a Public Relations manager for the school; he is very enthusiastic about all aspects of it, but particularly the teachers. He wanted me to know that he feels he has been given a chance and he is trying to take it.

Steve is 14, in S3 and has been at Burnside for a few months. He says that most of his family have come here and that he knew some of the other pupils before he came. His family is dispersed; he lives with an uncle, has a little brother and sister who live with mum, and another brother whom he has never seen. He also told me about another little sister who died of cot death 'she'd hardly been born' he said. Staff are pursuing an assessment for ADHD, but informal chat revealed they are not convinced that this is the only explanation for his sometimes 'odd' behaviour.

Steve fits my notion of the classic 'deprived wean'. He is small, dishevelled, fidgety, cheerful and instantly likeable. He has the phrases and attitudes of someone 60 years older. Steven seems relieved to be away from mainstream, and says they will be relieved he's away (though his words were more expressive!)

2. Burnside - Interview Data

2.1 Educational experience

Class and school size

Both Steve and Scott like being in a smaller school, Steve because there are fewer people to annoy him and Scott because it means he can get to know everybody. The smaller classes at Burnside are mentioned as positives by all of the pupils. For Caimbeul, Arteta and RS5000 the smaller classes mean they can get help with work without having to wait. Steve says the smaller classes work for him because there is less noise and so he doesn't get so wound up, Robert also says the smaller classes are quieter so he can concentrate on his work. Barry talks about the class size at mainstream having caused problems for him when he tried to go back in after periods of exclusion. Scott likes smaller classes because it gives him a chance to talk to the teachers.

Schoolwork

All the boys at Burnside talk in some detail about their schoolwork, some comparing it favourably to the work they had been set at mainstream. Scott feels that the work he has now is more relevant, he mentions a poem he is working on in English called 'Kid in the Bin' and asks '*...do you think really that they'll dae poems like [that] in mainstream?*'. RS5000 sums up the feelings of many of the boys when he says '*We're always getting work given to us ken its no too hard for us but its no going tae be a day in the park*'. Robert (who has the most recent experience of mainstream) seems less sure than the others about the work he is being set. He says some of it he can do easily and some he gets stuck on but the real difference is in the volume of work, he isn't expected to do nearly as much as he was at mainstream. For Caimbeul being able to work at his own pace is a big advantage, his experience in mainstream was of having to move on to new things before he had finished what he was working on and that had led to some frustration.

Many of the pupils at Burnside mention being allowed to have free time at the end of a lesson as something they like. For Scott, knowing he will get free time if he

finishes his set work helps him to concentrate, while Arteta found it difficult to concentrate for a whole period at mainstream. Without exception all the young people talk about the classroom as a place where they work and achieve, and free time is seen as a reward for that.

Six of the seven boys describe the certificates and course options available to them as being the same as mainstream, Steve says he is too new to the school to be able to tell. A number of the boys talk about the Access courses they are doing, Caimbeul says he thinks one of the teachers is an official SQA examiner and so is able to make sure everything is done properly. In addition all the pupils talk about their post-school options in terms of further education at college or through the army.

Differences between Burnside and mainstream

In relation to educational experience the biggest difference noted by the boys is the opportunity for receiving individual help. This is particularly important for Scott who feels he was falling behind with work at his last school and welcomes the chance to catch up. The school routines, especially the use of the units as a base for breaks, is also something identified as different. However, overall these pupils say that Burnside is a normal school in terms of the work that they do. The difference is the teachers.

G: So one last question I want to ask is if you can think back to mainstream and here if you can tell me what is the biggest difference?

Scott: Teachers

G: Right because some folk say it's the schoolwork

Scott: It's the teachers

G: And its how you get on with them?

Scott: Aye and they help you and that.

Curriculum

Burnside is a school which describes itself as offering an Alternative Curriculum comprising Outdoor Pursuits, Community Education, Options afternoons and Club afternoon. As far as most of the pupils are concerned they follow a normal school curriculum with some extras.

G: OK, we talked a wee bit about the Outdoor Ed options and the Options Afternoon, so would you say the subjects that you get here are different to what you get in a mainstream school?

RS000: No you get Maths, English, PE, Techy, IT, Art Home Eccy and all that in a mainstream school

Following a 'normal' curriculum is important for these boys, particularly in relation to their options after school.

G: [If the army see that] you've been to this school and not a mainstream school what might they think

Barry: No it would just be the same because we get the same work and that

G: Right OK so you think as long as you've got the same qualifications

Barry: Aye because we dae exams and that here too

Although the curriculum is seen as being normal, the 'extras' are important and are described as one of the best things about the school. For Barry it is one of the main incentives for him to attend school '*Because you get tae go oot and that eh?*' For Scott having the chance to go out helps him manage his behaviour the rest of the time, '*If you never had anything to go for there's no point in being behaved is there?*' This flagged up the issue of pupils in reward schemes working for the reward without internalising more lasting motivation for the behaviour, however when the discussion returns to this subject later Scott clarifies his view.

G: So that seems to work for you then the rewards of going out and free time in class?

Scott: Aye

G: Are you saying that's really helping you with your work and your behaviour?

Scott: Aye, I'm no just doing it for that, going out mountain biking and everything, I'm doing it for myself, I'm doing it, I do it for myself because I want to be a mechanic when I'm older

When pressed, the boys do come up with subjects that they would get at mainstream school but don't get at Burnside. Robert and Scott would both like to get music; RS5000 would like to do metalwork and Robert would prefer if social studies was weighed more towards Geography than History. Both RS5000 and Caimbeul note

that while the subject names may be the same as in mainstream, the content can be different.

G: Thinking about the subjects you get here and comparing it with mainstream one of the things I'm interested in is do you get the same subjects here or do you get different...

Caimbeul: Same subjects like but you wouldn't really do the same things as you would though even though you get the same subjects like with PE at mainstream you would get like rugby or cricket or something but here you do pool, and art you would do things like drawing and collages and that but here you would maybe get like a couple of glitter pens or something and like some bits to make up a picture and, which is alright, and that's probably about it but everything else is the same

Throughout all the interviews, with the exception of Robert, the boys seemed concerned that I shouldn't interpret anything they said as a criticism of the school. As with Caimbeul's inserted 'which is alright' at the end of his description of differences, Scott replied '*It doesnae bother me at all*' to a number of questions about how he felt about things being slightly different. Even Robert, the most critical of the pupils in terms of his evaluation of his work and the curriculum, would opt for the Burnside curriculum over mainstream if he had to choose.

2.2 Ethos

The data on ethos is presented under four headings from the 'climate and relationships' performance indicator from *How Good is Our School* (HMIE 2002b) as discussed in chapter 2.

Sense of identity and pride in the school

The majority of comments from all the pupils at Burnside are positive, with some approaching enthusiastic; predictably Scott shows his usual enthusiasm.

G: Ok to start can you tell me anything about what its like to be a young person in this school ...

Scott: Well em I like this school

Steve too is very complimentary.

G: So is there anything you like about his school compared with your other one?

Steve: It's a lot better than the other yin

The pupils talk about Burnside being better than their mainstream school, but the reasons they give for preferring it vary. The teachers and the small classes are the things most frequently mentioned as making the school better. Common to both of these is the sense of pupils being treated as individuals by teachers who have time to spend with them. Robert would prefer to be at mainstream, and Arteta, who is shortly to return to mainstream on a part-time time-table, is not sure, but even these two boys have very positive things to say about the school.

Scott became quite agitated when talking about the comments made by other young people about the school, he clearly feels a great loyalty to Burnside and will defend its reputation.

Pupil/staff relationships

The pupils at Burnside appear to enjoy good quality relationships with their teachers. The boys feel that their teachers want to help them and want them to succeed.

G: And why do you think that is?

Scott: I dunno, like here they'll gie you a chance eh because they're willing to gie chances if you're willing to take them

G: That's really interesting, let me check out that I understand what you're saying, do you get the feeling then that the teachers here kind of want you to manage

Scott: Aye they do

G: And is that different to mainstream?

Scott: Aye it is

Scott goes on to talk about the pictures of former pupils that the teachers keep on the wall. The teachers talk about them and what they are doing now, Scott feels they take pride in their success and this makes him feel that they care about what happens to him too.

The feeling of being valued by the staff has an impact on the boys' behaviour.

RS5000 talks about what makes the Burnside teachers different.

RS5000: Well they dinnae act like they're better because they're an adult so like they're more down to earth with you

G: Yeh so they're kind of more human?

[RS5000 nods]

G: Yes? so do you treat them differently then? Do you behave differently with those teachers that treat you like that?

RS5000: Yes If they just treat you like a brat that's when you show them it

G: Right so if they treat you like a brat you're going to behave like it yeh?

RS5000: Yeh

Caimbeul identifies 'respect' as the one thing that had improved his behaviour, '*If I treat then alright they treat me alright and I treat them alright*'. Scott too talks about his behaviour towards teachers being different in Burnside and explains it is, '*Because they help you, you get respect you gie respect eh?*'.

The pupils also talk about the teachers being relaxed and calm, Robert says they are '*Sound [...] they get on with you if you get on with them [...] you can have a laugh and they let you off with it sometimes*'. Caimbeul agrees that you can have a laugh with the teachers but he adds '*They'll have a laugh with you if you're having a laugh with them but if you were kicking off they would be like strict*'. Scott describes the response he gets from the head teacher:

See if you've been bad and you've been sent to him eh? He goes in and he tells you and says what you've done wrong and all that eh? right he says there's nae point in shouting and bawling at you because obviously you're just going to shout an bawl back aren't you eh? right so you just talk civil and he'll talk civil back to you.

Pupil behaviour and discipline

The pupils at Burnside are divided over how they evaluate the behaviour of young people in the school. Looking at their responses alongside their mainstream experience, it would appear that those who were bullied in mainstream feel that there

is less aggression and fighting in Burnside, the exception to this is Arteta, who reports being bullied in both schools.

The pupils who say there is more disruptive behaviour at Burnside report isolated incidences of extreme violence along with a more general tolerance of behaviour such as swearing at teachers. Robert in particular feels that the standard of acceptable behaviour is much higher in mainstream, and the ‘mucking about’ that happens only occasionally at mainstream happens all the time at Burnside.

Six of the seven boys say that their own behaviour has improved since coming to Burnside. Barry said he used to ‘*kick tables and that at the teachers at mainstream*’, he doesn’t do that at Burnside but he isn’t able to say why he thinks his behaviour has improved. Steve, however, has a clearer idea about how and why his behaviour has changed.

G: OK and do you think you treat the teachers here any differently to how you...

Steve: *Aye*

G: What are the differences?

Steve: *I behave for them and I dae the work for them*

G: Right and why is that why do you behave for them?

Steve: *Because you get on with them a lot better than you do in mainstream*

The pupils are unanimous in their view that the ‘demerits’ system, including unofficial exclusion from school is not at all effective in changing their behaviour. Only Barry, going for the easy option again, has something positive to say about demerits – he prefers them because ‘*it saves you using your hands tae write punnys*’.

Pupil morale

Five of the boys describe themselves as happy to stay at Burnside, Arteta isn’t sure and Robert wants to return to mainstream. All seven talk with some enthusiasm about work they have been doing in class, certificates obtained and courses taken. There is a sense of purpose behind these discussions - either returning to mainstream, going to college, or embarking on a career.

For those pupils who were bullied in mainstream but are not bullied in Burnside, there is a sense of relief, two boys said that they *could not* return to mainstream because of the behaviour of other pupils there. Another victim of bullying in mainstream talks about how playing football in Burnside helps to create a team spirit among the young people which leads to friendship.

A number of the boys talked about not feeling different at Burnside, that everyone is the '*same level as you*', or as RS5000 says,

We'll they're [the other boys] just basically the same as you but they've all got different problems [...] its all the same like a bunch of basically bad behaved bairns in the same building I dae ken how the teachers can cope

2.3 Stigma

In chapter 2 some key issues relating to stigma were identified. These are: pupils' preference for placement, which has been noted under 'pupil morale ' above; pupils' knowledge of what others think and how it relates to what they think of themselves; the reputation of the school and, finally, what might happen after school. In this section data from the Burnside pupils relating to these issues is presented.

Responses to the question 'What kind of person comes to Burnside?' range from 'normal people' through 'people with difficulties' to 'people who dinnae behave in mainstream', to simply 'people who dinnae behave'. None of the pupils talk about any kind of medical 'condition' it is not part of the vocabulary used by pupils at Burnside to explain their behaviour.

The pupils imagine that the teachers at Burnside share a similar view to their own of the young people who go there. They think their teachers see them as people who have problems and need help to manage. This is in sharp contrast to the view which they imagine their mainstream teachers had of them. Both Barry and RS5000 think

they were viewed as deliberately misbehaving, and indeed both boys admitted that this was indeed the case some of the time. Both Scott and Steve feel that the mainstream teachers had no time for them and that the teachers were just relieved when they left.

The suggestion that they may develop a 'bad' reputation as a result of attending this separate school is rejected by most of the pupils. At least three of the boys come from families where it is the norm for young people to be educated in separate provision. One boy talks about his father's experiences in a different residential school in the area, another says his whole family came to the school, a third talks about "twenty cousins" who have been in the separate education system.

Scott talks about how he has had to educate his peers outside school, other boys say they don't report having any trouble with other young people.

Scott: ... Outside and everything...you tell them you're at Burnside and they laugh and everything [...]

G: Right so somebody at mainstream was slagging you off for coming here?

Scott: Aye [...] but I think it's, I dae bother I think it's a good school

G: So does it bother you what other people think of it?

Scott: No they say it's a mongol school and everything and it's no by the way because I tell them what you do and you try and achieve it and everything and they go "oh right it's a normal school" and they try and help you and that.

G: Right so you're able to explain to them

Scott: Aye

G: So do you think people have got the wrong idea about what goes on here?

Scott: Aye

Caimbeul appears to have thought about the question of how reputations are acquired. He describes what happens when a young person is sent to Burnside.

Aye they get the wee tag ripped off them, but still they get a label for coming here like me because I've been labelled in mainstream and came here got rid of my label and when I go back to mainstream I'll still get a label.

Caimbeul goes on to explain that when at Burnside he doesn't feel any different to anyone else and doesn't feel he is being labelled, but he is worried that if he were to return to mainstream the fact that he had been in a separate school would mark him out as different. The idea that having attended this school might cause problems in the future has also occurred to Robert who admits to feeling a little worried about what a future employer might think.

3. Hawthornbank – First impressions

Once again these are taken from field notes made after the initial and subsequent visits to interview pupils; where my impressions are corroborated by comments in HMI Inspection Reports this is noted. Hawthornbank was inspected in 2001.

Hawthornbank is an imposing two-storey building, set directly on a main road. Access is through a side-entrance via a buzzer and intercom; the door opens into the main ground floor corridor and stairwell. The architecture of the building does not lend itself easily to its current purpose. The ceiling are high, the rooms and corridors large and the building materials are stone. The playground is laid with tarmac and the urban setting means that even if you are tall enough to see out of the high windows there is no 'green' in sight. There is a minimal amount of wall display in the corridors, although there is some more in classrooms. My initial impression was similar to that of the inspectors who wrote, 'The building is not welcoming and the school found it difficult to maintain displays in corridors and around the school.' (p. 7). The deputy head teacher has an office on the top floor from where CCTV pictures from strategic points around the school can be viewed. This was explained as an attempt to reduce bullying which had been taking place at certain locations.

At the time of my visits the school appeared noisy, with pupils running, shouting and swearing in the corridors not only between classes but also during class time. It should be noted here that my visits took place towards the end of the school year and

it may be that had I been present at another time I would have witnessed different behaviour. However, the inspectors too observed that 'lessons in S1/2 were frequently disrupted' (p. 5). During my visit it did not seem to be unusual for pupils to wander around the school, walk into classes and cause disruption, and to run in and out of the school. This behaviour was evident on both occasions I was in the school for interviews and on neither occasion did I see any member of staff control of the situation. Staff walked past the pupils and made comments about where they should be, but none seemed willing to 'take the pupil on'. As well as these more direct challenges to the authority of the school, the base-line of accepted pupil behaviour seemed to be low. Pupils were frequently swearing and shouting at teachers with little apparent consequence. Many of the interactions I observed between adults and young people were characterised by hostility and tension.

The Inspection of 2001 concluded that there were 'some important weaknesses in ethos' at Hawthornbank. In particular, pupil behaviour was a concern, 'Many pupils, particularly in S1/2, were volatile and displayed aggressive, and at times threatening and disrespectful behaviour amongst themselves and to staff' (p.5). In discussions with the inspectors staff talked about the challenge presented by some pupils, the report states 'They [staff] felt strongly that the school was not appropriately staffed to cope with difficult, and at times threatening situations' (p. 4). The atmosphere in the building, pupil behaviour and staff morale, which were raised as concerns in the 2001 report and which no doubt contributed to the evaluation of ethos as 'fair', were still in evidence on my visit over a year later.

As for the Burnside pupils, these summaries are presented in two paragraphs, the first is derived from information from the pupil unless otherwise stated, the second contains my impressions.

Alex is in S3 and is 13 years old. He has been at Hawthornbank for about a year, he came directly from another special school in the area where he had been from Primary 5 until the end of S1. Alex has a record of needs and is on medication for

ADHD. He used to get a taxi to school, but now takes a twenty-minute bus journey; Alex enjoys this increased independence.

Alex is short, with a pale round face and a skinhead haircut. He seems very subdued throughout the interview, which he ended before all the areas had been covered. He wasn't restless or unwilling to co-operate, though perhaps a little lethargic; he simply decided he had done enough. While Alex seems to want to be at Hawthornbank, he would like it to be a bit different, the behaviour of other kids is 'a bit nippy' and he wants staff to be stricter. On two occasions Alex's interview is interrupted by another pupil coming into the room pursued by two members of staff.

Emma is 12 and is in S2. She came to Hawthornbank about 5 months ago from a mainstream secondary school. Emma did not want her interview to be taped. Her mother has arranged for Emma to be assessed for ADHD. Interestingly, and confirmed by staff, this is being pursued independently of the school.

Emma is slim and dark with shoulder-length hair in a pony-tail, she wears glasses and has on the 'uniform' of branded sports top and trousers with a side stripe. The clothes are not convincing; Emma seems to be trying very hard to create an appearance. She is eager to assert the faults of the school and staff, that she is cleverer than the other pupils, and that she will be leaving soon. Staff confirmed that she was bright, indeed 'too bright for her own good'. Emma became restless during the interview and began throwing a bottle of water up in the air, whilst sitting on her chair balanced on its back legs with her feet on the table. I asked her to stop and she replied 'Dinnae start on me or I'll start on you'. I said I was interested in what she had to say but was finding her behaviour distracting, adding that if she wanted to end the interview she could. Emma chose to continue the interview and was settled for the rest of the time.

Hayley is in S2, and is 12 years old. Hayley has a record of need, she takes Ritalin for ADHD but does not want this to be known by the other pupils and all staff. Hayley came at the start of S1 from a special primary school where she had been

since P5. She lives with her Mum and big sister who is in S3 at mainstream, and who Hayley describes as 'weak' for allowing herself to be bullied.

Hayley is an attractive girl with blond curly hair, apparently a previous member of staff had nicknamed her 'the fallen angel'. She is lively, chatty and appears confident; she was a pleasure to interview. The Hayley I observed around the school could have been a different child: she was verbally abusive, openly defiant and oppositional to staff. I mentioned this to Hayley, she agreed with my interpretation of what I had seen, but was at a loss to explain it. Hayley appeared to revel in telling stories of her own violent behaviour, and the reputation she has cultivated of being tough and 'not to be messed with'.

Jacky is 12 and is in S2, he came to Hawthornbank at the start of secondary from a mainstream primary school. His last year of primary school was disrupted as he was 'kicked out' of one school and then spent the last term in a different school. Jacky stays with his Mum. His older brother, who is 19, went to residential school from S3 onwards.

Jacky seems much older than 12. He appears to be streetwise; he has the 'uniform', including baseball cap, and comes across as a powerful, confident character who does what he wants. Jacky was the one name that repeatedly came up in interviews with other young people as someone who can be extremely violent, is unpredictable and who other pupils are scared of. Jacky sprawled at the table, taking up a lot of space and on one occasion got up and 'prowled' around the room. Jacky constantly tapped the microphone, at times covering up and whispering, conspiratorially, derogative things about staff and the school. Jacky seems to believe he belongs in a special school and that he couldn't cope with mainstream. I found Jacky to be a very likeable, engaging young man, but one whom I would hesitate before challenging.

Jamie is 13 and is in S3, he will be going to a residential school after the holidays. He has been at Hawthornbank for only 4 months, having come from mainstream. Jamie resisted any discussion about his family, apart from to say he has a big brother.

He is the only pupil who asked to hear his voice played back on the tape recorder. Jamie knew about Hawthornbank before he came here as he knew of other people who had come to the school.

Jamie is a good looking young man, again wearing the branded sweatshirt, trousers, trainers and cap. Although he was quite restless during the interview, shifting his position in his seat, his body language was very confident. Jamie decided where we should sit, he was also confident at putting forward his own view and ensuring that he had been correctly understood. Jamie is concerned about the level of work he is doing, he hopes to be a scaffolder when he leaves school and wants to do well in his exams. Jamie talked about missing his friends from his old school.

Larsson is 12 and is in S2. He has a record of needs and takes Ritalin for ADHD. Larsson came at the start of S1 from the same special primary school as Hayley, where he had been since Primary 3.

Larsson is small, he has a pale complexion and a very short crew cut. He seemed a little cautious at first but became more relaxed. He got upset towards the end, when talking about hassle he gets because he comes to Hawthornbank, I asked if he was finding the interview difficult, and if he wanted to stop he said 'quite' but that he wanted to carry on. Larsson misses his friends from home: a big issue for him is wanting to be 'normal'. He seemed very surprised when I guessed that he supported Celtic, I told him the name he has chosen to be called had been a clue.

Marie is in S2 and is 12 years old. She was at mainstream primary but came to Hawthornbank at the start of S1. Marie has a record of needs and although she has no formal diagnosis there are concerns about her learning, and possible motor, difficulties. A number of staff expressed the view that she is inappropriately placed at Hawthornbank, and an alternative placement is being sought. Marie's Mum and Dad have recently separated; she lives with her Mum and younger sister.

Marie has shoulder-length glossy black hair, wears glasses and has what she describes as 'buck teeth'. She looks younger than her peers and not at all up with street fashion. Marie's conversation is liberally laced with medical terminology and themes, accounts of illness, accidents and conditions. She also uses social work or 'therapeutic' jargon when talking about herself and her feelings. A phrase from my professional experience springs to mind; similar children would be described as having been 'social worked to death'. Marie was very polite and eager to talk; she seemed very comfortable talking to an adult and was keen to draw out the interview for as long as possible. In contrast to her excellent conversational skills, underlying all her chat I detected a basic lack of comprehension, for example she has very poor understanding of time.

4. Hawthornbank - Interview data

As with the data from Burnside, the Hawthornbank data will be presented under three main headings, educational experience, ethos and stigma. Within each of these the same sub-headings as for Burnside will be used.

4.1 Educational experience

Class and school size

The maximum class size at Hawthornbank is six pupils, although at the time the interviews took place some pupils were in a class with only one other person. The assumption that a small class is necessarily a positive is challenged by a number of the pupils.

Jamie and Hayley say their current classrooms are noisier than a class of 30 pupils; Alex disagrees and says a class of 6 is quieter. Marie says that even though the classes are smaller it doesn't make any difference to her experience.

*It makes a difference but it doesn't make a difference to my work
because they call me names they batter me when no one's looking*

they're chanting [...] and everything and I'm having to sit there and take it all...

For Hayley the size of class in mainstream school is a real barrier to her returning there. Despite being one of those who described the Hawthornbank classes as very noisy she felt that just being in a room with 30 or more other people would be very difficult.

I don't really know its just a bigger class ken if you're in a wee class at a behaviour school right and you go into a big massive class at a mainstream school right 32 people in a class at a mainstream school it would be quite hard to cope.

I ask the pupils if they get more help with their work in a smaller class, some agree that they do and that this is one of the good things about the school. However, for Jamie this is a concern

G: Does being in a small class does that mean you're able to get more help from the teacher? Is that good then does that help you with your work?

Jamie: No because sometimes you get too much help and you're no really daein it yourself

However, later in the interview Jamie mentions the small size of the school as a positive for him as it allows him to get to know the teachers more. Conversely, Larsson is quite clear that he would prefer to be in a bigger school and that he does not like smaller classes. Indeed, throughout his interview Larsson consistently expresses the desire to be 'normal' in a normal school, and anything which he sees as making Hawthornbank different to a mainstream school is criticised.

Schoolwork

Most of the pupils at Hawthornbank say they are doing work that is easy and below the level they would be asked to do in a mainstream school. Jamie, concerned about his future job prospects, says he would rather be doing harder work. Hayley thinks one of the teachers must think she is daft as the work is so easy. However, at the

same time as believing the work is easy, all of these pupils, with the exception of Jamie, also state that it is at the right level for them.

Differences between Hawthornbank and mainstream

In terms of the educational experience, pupils at Hawthornbank tend not to identify specific differences but express general dissatisfaction. There are two exceptions to this, Emma and Marie. Emma, who seems to have been waiting for an opportunity to tell someone what she thinks, comes up with a long list of complaints. This includes the size of the school, locks on the door, having to have dinner in the hall, everyone getting free lunches, not being allowed salt and sauce because kids throw it around, the school being cold, the condition of books, finishing with 'and the computers are old bangers'. Taking a more positive view, Marie feels that things are explained more clearly to her here; she likes that she is allowed to spend free time in class reading and she enjoys getting certificates.

Curriculum

The pupils are restricted in comments they can make about curriculum comparisons with mainstream as only Jamie and Emma have attended a mainstream secondary school. The curriculum at Hawthornbank is similar to that in most mainstream primary schools (with the addition of a modern language) and broader than in most separate primary schools. Overall the curriculum is not something that seems to concern the pupils at Hawthornbank to any great degree, the following comment from Jacky sums up the attitude of most of the pupils

G: And does it bother you that you're getting different subjects
[to mainstream]

Jacky: Doesnae matter, schools a school you get learnt

This school describes itself as not offering an alternative curriculum, but does make use of 'options afternoons' and trips out. Marie is the most positive in general about school-work and enjoys 'trips' she doesn't see these activities as part of the curriculum. She talks about going rock-climbing and bowling and to the cinema but

equates these with a trip from her previous school to the pantomime. Emma similarly talks about a trip out as a reward for good behaviour.

There is no more enthusiasm for 'options' afternoons than for the rest of the school day; it is not mentioned as one of the things the pupils like best about the school, nor talked about in positive terms, rather they seem to be viewed as time-fillers rather than purposeful activities. Hayley, using a very dismissive tone says, '*but options is just like making friendship bracelets*'. Similarly, Marie seems unhappy with the options on offer saying they should be 'restyled' to offer different activities with more structure.

There are two issues that the pupils at Hawthornbank have with the curriculum on offer which can be seen as consequences of the small school size and therefore small teaching team. Two pupils express dissatisfaction with having the same teacher for more than one subject. Jamie suggests that teachers end up teaching subjects they don't know well. Pupils also talk about subjects that they would like to get but don't. Music, Drama, and Craft Design and Technology are all mentioned by at least two or three students.

In addition to being taught some different subjects, the young people also comment that even though the names of some of the subjects are the same what is actually delivered is different. Hayley, Marie, Emma and Jamie all talk about their unhappiness with the way Science is taught at Hawthornbank. All would like to be allowed to do practical lessons; they currently do all their Science work with pen and paper. Jamie added that Italian and Art are not taught in the same way as at mainstream. There is understanding that Science is taught as it is because of safety concerns, but the three girls feel that this is unfair on those people who could be trusted to behave in a practical class.

Hayley talks in very positive and animated way about time she spends at the City Farm working with animals, and about certificates she gets there. She reports that she does this outside school hours on a Friday as the teachers wouldn't let her miss

all her lessons. The visits are facilitated by a worker from EYSIP². Hayley is happy with the arrangement as doing it this way means the teachers can't stop her going as a punishment for misbehaviour in school. There seems to be an element of victory in the way Hayley talks about this.

4.2 Ethos

Sense of identity and pride in the school

Only one of the pupils at Hawthornbank, Marie, expresses anything approaching liking for the school as a whole, although when pressed others are able to point to some parts that they like such as individual subjects. Overall the impression gained is not simply that the young people don't like the school and would rather not be there (although that feeling is present) but that they actually hold it in contempt. The following quotes demonstrate this attitude.

G: Where would you like to be?

Jamie: In a mainstream

G: Is there anything, if you went back to mainstream is there anything you'd miss about here?

Jamie :Nuh

Jacky: They're thinking about knocking the wall down to make the playground look bigger

G: Is that going to make it more like a mainstream school?

Jacky: No it'll still be pish

G: So just to start off Larsson what I'm interested in...well I asked you earlier before the tape is on what do you think of this school?

Larsson: Sometimes it can be alright

That's not what you said when the tape is off!

[laughing]

Larsson: Well it's shite

² Edinburgh Youth Social Inclusion Partnership

Pupil/Staff relationships

The majority of pupils at Burnside describe teachers as making the most significant difference between mainstream and separate school and spoke very positively about relationships in terms of mutual respect. The pupils at Hawthornbank do not talk about their relationships with their teachers in the same way. There are not the same unprompted and unconditional positive comments; none of the Hawthornbank pupils talked about respect; and there is no indication that the pupils feel valued by their teachers.

Of all the young people I interviewed in Hawthornbank, Jamie is the most positive about the teachers. This emerges when I suggest to him that it sounds as if he is saying he really prefers mainstream school and he corrects me.

G: OK correct me if I'm wrong Jamie but it sounds to me like you prefer [*his previous school*], you prefer the subjects...

Jamie: [interrupting] *No...both I like but in different ways like I dae like [his previous school] because its mair... I dae ken...*

G: Is it hard to put your finger on it? Yeh? well what is it that you like about here?

Jamie: *Better teachers, you get tae ken them more*

G: Right

Jamie: *Because it's a wee school*

Both Alex and Larsson talk about the teachers at Hawthornbank being more relaxed and friendlier than other teachers, but Emma rejects the suggestion that the 'less strictness' she identifies is because the teachers are more relaxed, rather she sees them as unable to maintain discipline.

Two of the pupils describe the teachers as not being in control of their tempers; '*Miss Tay blows her head off completely.. she completely blows over*' [Marie] and '*Teachers shout at you, go nuts at you [...] Here they shout their heid off and some of them swear*' [Jamie].

In general, the feeling of contempt towards the school extends to the feelings of some of the young people towards their teachers, although once again Marie is much more positive than her peers. Emma describes the teachers as *'Like wee puppy dogs, trying to be too nice to the kids and letting them get away with stuff'*. Jacky says simply, *'They dinnae have a clue'* when talking about what he perceives to be the teachers' inability to make a decision and stick to it.

Most of the pupils make individual assessments and are able to identify differences between teachers.

Jamie: ...some of the teachers have got attitude and that, some of the teachers dinnae like you

G: Some of the teachers here have an attitude?

Jamie: And get you wound up

G: So, most of the teachers here are better than mainstream but there are still some here that are a bit of a problem?

Jamie: Aye

For Alex a good teacher is one who gives work that he can manage; for Hayley too, the subject taught can make a difference between liking or disliking a teacher. The teachers are generally thought to be fair, or at least more fair than those in mainstream. Alex in particular has a high regard for the teachers in this respect.

Pupils' behaviour and discipline

The behaviour of young people in the school is an important issue for all of the young people, and unlike some of the other themes, this is something on which there is almost complete unanimity. In all the interviews this is the area of discussion that dominates and the young people clearly have strongly held views on the matter. All the pupils agree that pupil behaviour is a problem, and most think that the teachers are not strict enough.

Not only do the young people talk about poor behaviour, but they also say that it is the behaviour that makes the school feel 'different'.

G: So does that mean that the level of behaviour of young people here is it generally worse than at mainstream in terms of shouting and running around and swearing?

Jamie: A lot A lot worse

G: And does that make a difference to what the school feels like, what it's like to be in the school?

Jamie: Aye it just feels like its not a normal school like

G: It feels like its not a normal school

Jamie: You ken it's no anyway but straight it is the people that are in here

G: So the way the other kids are behaving and the noise and that kind of reminds you that you're not in a normal mainstream school

Jamie: Aye

Jacky gives a similar view to Jamie, although where Jamie seems to be trying to distance himself from '*the people that are in here*', Jacky uses the term '*we*'.

Jacky: Kids here are a bit different

G: Yeh? How are they different?

Jacky: They go radge because of nothing

G: Right so basically you've got more angrier people here?

Jacky: Aye

G: Maybe you would get some folk like that in mainstream ...or would they just be different?

Jacky: Different though no much different. I've saw a few [kids from local mainstream school] go radge

G: OK so you do get a few kids like that in mainstream

Jacky: They know how to stop and calm down and we dinnae they know how to control their temper they dinnae take tablets like ritalin

The behaviour of others makes these young people feel annoyed (Larsson), angry (Marie), and scared (Hayley). Larsson and Hayley also think that being in a school with poor discipline has made their own behaviour worse.

Hayley: My mum says right if you come from a mainstream school like, I come from a mainstream school right and I think its just making me worse

G: Sorry what's making you worse?

Hayley: Coming to a behaviour school like where everybody's like I dunno I think its made [Marie] worse as well she used to be a quiet wee lassie but now she's no [...]

G: But what is it about a school like this that makes your behaviour worse?

Hayley: I dunno its just you get off with more things than you get off with in mainstream

Four pupils want their teachers to be more strict. Alex talks about teachers letting him sit quietly in class if he doesn't want to do his work, he says he would prefer it if they told him to get on with his work. Hayley echos this when she says, *'Everybody would just do their work if this school is a wee bit stricter'*.

Pupil morale

Closely linked to both the observed lack of identity with, or pride in, the school, and the concerns raised about pupil behaviour, is the issue of pupil morale. None of the young people had unequivocally good things to say about being at the school. The three girls talked about either having been 'battered', being threatened with a 'battering', or they are threatening to batter someone else. Marie, in particular, talks at length about being bullied in the school, something which the teaching staff are already well aware of. Jamie also talks about the high level of violence in the school. Emma says she gets called names and the teachers do nothing.

In terms of peer relationships, none of the pupils talk about having friends at the school, Jamie is careful to make it clear that while he knows everyone in the school he doesn't count any of them as friends. When I ask Marie if she had friends here she replies *'No not one'*. Hayley speaks about having been bullied when she arrived, but says she no longer has that problem as everyone now knows she'll hit back. Emma thinks the older girls are OK but one girl her own age always 'wants to batter' her.

None of the young people talk about particular pieces of schoolwork they are proud of, or any successes they have had, although Marie does mention that she regularly gets certificates.

Emma, Jamie and Larsson are definite that they want to be in mainstream, Hayley and Jacky say they couldn't cope with mainstream, and Marie would like to stay at Hawthornbank but have all the other pupils leave. Although Alex ended his interview before these issues were discussed, from his answers to other questions it would appear that he is quite content at Hawthornbank. Things are generally 'OK' or 'alright' and 'about the same' as other schools. He prefers the teachers and he likes getting PE, the impression gained is that he is as happy here as he would be in any other school.

4.3 Stigma

When asked to describe the school the young people say it is for 'behaviour needs' or 'mental needs' or for 'pupils who need support'. Once again Marie has a slightly idiosyncratic perspective, she sees herself as belonging in the school but thinks that the other young people there are misplaced and should be taken out to make way for pupils who have real problems like her. Marie describes herself as a 'special needs person' and explains:

That means like I can't like I'm a special needs person that means like I is born with problems that I can't control [...] That causes eh that causes angriness, fed-upness, meanness, unhappiness.

Three other young people in Hawthornbank also talk about their behaviour as something outwith their control. One pupil explicitly mentions ADHD and another two talk about Ritalin. It is interesting to note that of these three pupils only one is currently taking Ritalin and diagnosed as having ADHD.

Both Jacky and Hayley speak about not being able to cope or needing support. Jacky talks about an 'activity bit' near the school but says the pupils can't access it, when I

ask why he says '*we've to be supported eh?*'. This is said as if he is stating the obvious, rather than it being something he is complaining about. Hayley talks about having the chance to back to mainstream but not wanting to take it because she thinks couldn't manage there.

Unlike Jacky and Hayley who seem to accept that they 'belong' in Hawthornbank, Jamie and Larsson seem to distance themselves from the school, they describe it as 'not normal' and it is this that makes them want to leave.

Larsson: [talking about his friends] I just want to be at the school they're at

G: Uhu do they know that you come to a different school?

Larsson: Aye

[...]

G: What is it about the school that they go to that you prefer?

Larsson: Because that's a normal school I'm no in a normal school

G: And you'd like to be in a mainstream school?

Larsson: Aye

Emma also rejects any identification with the school, she says she doesn't mind if people know she comes to Hawthornbank as she'll '*soon be leaving anyway*'.

Larsson, Jamie and Emma are the only pupils who talk about missing their friends from outside school and having ongoing contact with them.

Hayley, Marie and Larsson all reported being teased or 'slagged' because of coming to this school. For Larsson this seems particularly difficult, and may go some way to explaining the strong theme throughout his interview of 'being normal' and his insistence that he wants to go to mainstream.

Conclusion

As the extracts presented above demonstrate the interviews with young people generated rich data on a number of issues. While all individuals had their own unique story to tell, of particular relevance for this thesis are the contrasts identifiable

between the groups of pupils from different schools. Areas on which there seems to be a significant difference between groups include:

- Acceptable standards of behaviour
- Pupil/ Teacher relationships
- Engagement with education
- Attitude to mainstream school
- Pupils' descriptions of themselves and their peers, including views on what's 'normal'.

The following chapter will analyse these differences in detail with particular attention given to issues relating to the Research Questions, the focus of which is the way in which curriculum provision impacts on ethos, stigmatisation and educational experience. To this end, the schools were selected to be as similar as possible except in terms of their curricular provision. An important part of the analysis must be to consider the extent to which the differences identified between the schools are in fact related to curriculum provision, or whether other more significant factors can be identified.

Chapter 8

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present an analysis of the data collected from interviews with pupils and from field notes taken on visits to the schools. This analysis will speak to the research questions which emerged from the literature review in chapter 2 and which explore the relationships between themes of educational experience, curriculum, ethos, and stigma.

Through this analysis themes will emerge which will be picked up and explored in more depth in the subsequent discussion chapter. These themes include the apparent isolation of pupils and staff in separate provision from mainstream and the vulnerability of both pupils and staff in this sector.

1. Framework of analysis

One obvious option would be to simply present an analysis of what the data has to say under the four headings of the Research Question; curriculum, ethos, educational experience and stigma. However, as is often the case in research, in addition to the data talking to these themes, other unpredicted themes or patterns emerged from the data.

Although the schools were selected along one dimension of difference – the curriculum on offer, in other ways they were, on paper at least, very similar. The biggest surprise therefore of this phase of the research was the extent to which both the pupils' experiences and my observations of the two different schools were so fundamentally different. Although clear differences between the groups of pupils in the different schools emerged there were also, more predictably, individual differences identified. A further confounding factor was that although schools were

chosen according to whether or not they said they offered an ‘alternative’ or ‘mainstream’ curriculum –it became clear that there was, in practice, no such evident division between them.

The purpose of the research design was to allow an exploration of any link between curriculum and ethos, educational experience and stigma. However it transpired, as I will argue below, that in one of the schools the ethos was being strongly affected by other factors. The extent to which these other factors limit the ability to draw meaningful comparisons between the schools, and the generalisability of the findings to other separate provision will be discussed in the subsequent chapter. In this chapter the emphasis will be on disentangling the complex interplay between curriculum, ethos, educational experience and stigma. I will suggest that although the type of curriculum on offer may have some effect on ethos, the ethos of both schools in the study had a large effect on how the curriculum, whether mainstream or alternative, was delivered. In addition the stigmatisation or otherwise of the young people in the schools will be shown to be closely linked to both the school ethos and to the curriculum content and educational experience.

I have chosen to present this analysis under four sections looking at comparisons between schools, pupil and gender groups and individuals. However, before presenting this analysis there were important differences between the pupil populations which should be discussed in relation to any impact they will have had on the findings.

1.1 Differences between pupil populations

The pupils in Hawthornbank tend to be younger than those in Burnside. They are more likely to have come direct from a special primary school and to have had no experience of mainstream secondary schooling. Despite being younger, the length of time already spent in separate provision tends to be higher for the Hawthornbank pupils.

The issue of age of referral to special school needs closer inspection. If it can be inferred from the fact that many of the pupils at Hawthornbank have been in separate provision since early primary, that their presenting problems are more serious, and are more challenging and disaffected than the comparative element of the study would be seriously implicated. While it will, of course, be the case that individual pupils in both schools have different levels of difficulties, evidence to suggest that the groups of pupils are broadly comparable in this respect will be presented below.

The local authorities in which these schools are located have very similar numbers of pupils attending primary school, both having close to 28,000 pupils. Although the number of pupils is similar, the number of places in separate primary schools for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties is very different. The Hawthornbank authority currently has 78 places, and until the amalgamation of two schools less than 2 years ago there were an additional 24 places, giving a total of around 100 places in primary separate provision. The largest separate primary school, providing for 60 pupils, acts as a 'feeder' primary for Hawthornbank with most of the pupils leaving Primary 7 moving directly to S1 in Hawthornbank. Three of the Hawthornbank pupils interviewed had come directly from primary special schools.

The Burnside authority currently has 2 separate education centres for primary aged children, with a total of 12 places available. This authority closed all of its residential schools around 5 years ago, one of which provided places for 8 primary aged pupils. The primary education centres aim to give pupils planned and supported time in mainstream before moving to secondary school¹. None of the pupils I interviewed at Burnside had come directly from special primary schools, although three had attended such a school in early primary and had then been reintegrated into mainstream or support unit provision.

¹ As outlined in the authority's Behaviour Support Services document.

Thus the earlier referral to separate provision of the pupils in one area can be seen as a consequence of the local authorities' differing policies for provision of services for pupils who have SEBD, rather than differences in the kinds of pupils. This interpretation is strengthened when the self-reported behaviour of pupils leading to referral and the types of difficulties they are said to have is taken in to account. Both groups of pupils report comparable problems in mainstream. There are similar descriptions of violent behaviour, assaults on staff, disruption, non-attendance, and of bullying. None of the children in either group is 'accommodated', all live with at least one parent with the exception of one boy at Burnside who stays with his uncle. Data from the questionnaire returns confirms that the total school populations have very similar profiles in terms of numbers of pupils diagnosed with ADHD, pupils' home base, and perceived changes in pupil intake.

The one area in which there is a discrepancy between the authorities is when the numbers of people living in extreme poverty are compared. Although the Hawthornbank authority has low unemployment figures it does have pockets of severe deprivation: five postcode sectors (with 8% of the population) are among the 10% most deprived areas of Scotland. Only 2% of the population of Burnside's authority live in such an area (Scottish Executive 2001). There is known to be a correlation between living in poverty and being identified as having behavioural difficulties in school (e.g., Dubow and Ippolito 1994, Farrington 1995, Cooper 2005) but while this might go some way to explaining higher numbers of pupils in trouble at school it does not follow that the difficulties experienced by those individual pupils will be more extreme.

Although there is, therefore, little evidence to support the view that Hawthornbank pupils were more disaffected or challenging than the pupils at Burnside, their placement history will have relevance for this analysis. Three out of the seven pupils interviewed at Hawthornbank had come direct from a special primary school and thus had no experience of mainstream school with which to make comparisons. In contrast all seven of the Burnside pupils had previously been placed in mainstream secondary schools, although three of them had been in support units. Therefore

when making comparisons between separate provision and mainstream at secondary school level the Burnside pupils will be basing their responses on more direct experience.

The comparative ages of the groups of pupils should also be borne in mind when the responses to questions about aspirations for the future are considered. The pupils at Burnside all were able to talk in terms of future careers and necessary qualifications where this was much less common among the Hawthornbank pupils. While this can be seen as evidence of the Burnside pupils' higher level of engagement with education, and as a reflection of the attitude of the teachers in each school, it is also the case that pupils in S1 and S2 in general are more distant from these kinds of decisions than pupils in S3 and S4.

1.2 Differences between schools

The similarities and differences between the surface characteristics (such as number and gender of pupils, location, type of building) of Burnside and Hawthornbank have been described in chapter 6. The schools were selected because of their similarities across all key dimensions with the exception of the type of curriculum on offer.

However, as I will go on to illustrate, it became clear early into the data collection that the most significant difference between the two schools lay in their ethos rather than curriculum provision. It has been noted (chapter 2) that ethos is notoriously difficult to measure and thus any discussion of ethos is open to the criticism of being subjective. However the robustness of the following analysis is, I believe, increased by the fact that it is derived from a range of sources: my observations, pupil interviews and HMI reports. This data was reported in the previous chapter. Table 8.1 presents a summary of those findings alongside the relevant HGIOS performance indicators for ethos. Alongside each comment the evidence base is indicated; I = interviews, O = observations and H = HMI report.

Ethos indicator	Hawthornbank	Burnside
5.1 Climate and relationships		
<i>Sense of identity and pride in the school</i>	Most pupils are highly critical of the school. [I]	Most pupils are very positive about the school. [I]
<i>Reception and atmosphere</i>	Not welcoming, tense atmosphere. [O, H]	Welcoming, calm orderly atmosphere. [O, H]
<i>Pupil and staff morale</i>	Most pupils report being unhappy, staff appear stressed. [I, O]	Most pupils report being happy, staff appear positive. [I, O, H]
<i>Pupil/staff relationships</i>	Most pupils have little respect for staff. Some staff are negative towards pupils. [I, O]	Mutually positive and respectful. [I, O, H]
<i>Pupils' behaviour and discipline</i>	Frequent disruption to lessons, pupils report behaviour is a problem. [I, O, H]	Pupil behaviour is generally acceptable with isolated violent/disruptive incidents. [I, H]
5.2 Expectations and promoting achievement		
<i>Pupil and staff expectations and use of praise</i>	Staff do not challenge pupils on behavioural issues. [I, O]	Pupils believe staff want them to succeed, pupils talk about ambitions. Inappropriate behaviour is addressed. [I, H]
<i>Promoting an ethos of achievement</i>	Many pupils report work is too easy. [I]	Pupils entered for SQA qualifications, encouraged to go on to Further Education. [O, I]

Table 8.1 Source of data relating to ethos

In the face of such strong evidence concerning the difference in ethos between these two schools, set against their apparent similarities, questions are raised about the 'production' of ethos. How is it that these schools came to be so different? To answer this question it will be necessary to explore more deeply the circumstances of

each school. In the following section I will propose one explanation for the difference in ethos which centres on the impact of wider system changes. This analysis does not claim to explain the whole picture of the production of school ethos which is as previously argued a complex, multi-faceted phenomena. It does however seek to explore what I suggest are key determining contextual events and circumstances.

In chapter 2 it was suggested that effective schools for pupils with SEBD are those with clear goals which are agreed and shared by staff who felt able to make decisions. In addition Cole, Visser and Upton's (1998) concept of 'rubber boundaries', used to describe highly structured systems with room for flexibility, allowing the establishment of trusting relationships, was introduced. Common to both these models is the underlying sense of purpose, inherent in which must be a belief that the institution can make a difference. I will argue that much of the difference between ethos in these two schools can be traced back to staff morale in each school and in particular their perception of the degree of control which they have over events. I will further argue that this perception of control is in turn influenced by external factors due to re-organisation of systems at a wider level. The consequence of staff feelings of ineffectiveness and lack of control has been the development of an ethos in which disruptive pupil behaviours go unchallenged, thus the issues of discipline and control can be seen as central.

In this section more space will be given over to discussing the origins of the ethos in Hawthornbank than Burnside, because it is in the former that the ethos is most problematic. A word of caution is needed at this point, it should be noted that no formal interviews were carried out with staff in either school. At the outset it was decided to prioritise the views of pupils as an often unheard group. However, given the striking nature of the contrast between the two schools and the reasons which I am suggesting lie behind it, it is clear that without interviews with staff my interpretation can only be tentative.

Before exploring the origins of the ethos in Hawthornbank, it must first be clearly described, with particular reference to those aspects which are related to the key issue of discipline and control. From observations and interviews at Hawthornbank the emerging picture is of a school in which control between adults and pupils is finely balanced. Pupils were observed walking or running in and out of classrooms and of the school. Pupils were verbally abusive to staff without any response or consequence. Pupils whose behaviour was threatening or dangerous – one throwing stones at the staff room window, one breaking a window, and another sliding down a banister - were not confronted by staff. Staff appeared unwilling or unable to challenge any pupil misbehaviour. The impression gained is of a 'powder-keg' which could explode at any time. However, some of the same pupils who were observed behaving in this challenging way said they often felt scared and wanted staff to be more strict. If there was any sense of purpose about the school it appeared to be to 'get through' the next lesson or the day, there was no (neither explicit nor implicit) talk of goals or purpose, this was in marked contrast to informal conversations I had with staff at Burnside.

The reluctance of staff to intervene is evidenced first by the use of CCTV to monitor areas where bullying occurs. The cameras are in a room at the top of the school, at the other end of the school from one of the key areas, and watched by a promoted member of staff. However, there is no adult presence in the bullying 'hot spot' itself. Second, it was explained to me that a young person who had just broken a window, and was wandering into classes, running in and out of the school, was being 'given space' [Field notes 16/6/03]. And third, when another pupil who had been challenging in class that morning ran outside and started throwing stones at the staff room window no member of staff went to intervene and the comment was made that if he hurt someone they would be able to exclude him [Field notes 29/5/03]. These incidents combined suggest a 'hands off' approach to managing challenging behaviour.

I sensed some discomfort on the part of some staff that a visitor to the school should witness such behaviour. One member of the management team explained the 'hands

off' strategy as part of the school's 'therapeutic' approach to discipline. However another member of the teaching team, aware that I was present in the room (she surveyed the room and made eye-contact before speaking) referring to the stone-thrower, said to a colleague 'next time you hold him down while I punch him, he's just a nasty little bastard' [field notes 29/5/03].

According to Millham *et al.* (1975) discussed in chapter 2, a therapeutic approach to behaviour management is one which uses the relationships between staff and pupils to control pupil behaviour. In therapeutic environments pupils respond to the expectations of adults with whom they have established positive trusting relationships and whose approval they seek. However, it would appear that in Hawthornbank 'therapeutic' has been understood as meaning a lack of adult control or limit-setting of any kind. In the absence of other discipline systems, positive relationships are pre-requisites for any pupil having an investment in changing their behaviour: no such relationships were in evidence in Hawthornbank. Because of the lack of such relationships, and the absence of any evidence of pupils being asked to reflect on their behaviour (another characteristic of a therapeutic approach) I suggest that the claims to follow a 'therapeutic' approach made by some staff at Hawthornbank is a post hoc rationalisation of a discipline system in which adults fail to exert any authority. In conclusion, the evidence supports the interpretation that the staff at Hawthornbank are reluctant to intervene. I will argue below that this results from low staff morale, which in turn stems from a sense of powerlessness in their working environment.

An explanation of the origins of Hawthornbank staff team's feeling of powerlessness which has both 'face validity' and which was accepted as convincing by two professionals who were working with pupils in the school, lies in the uncertainty around the future of the provision. In the interests of preserving the anonymity of the school some details will be omitted. As mentioned in chapter 6, Hawthornbank was due to be closed in 2003. It had been earmarked for closure as part of the local authority restructuring of provision for pupils outwith the mainstream but the time-scale had not worked out according to plan. The school remains open but is still due

to close sometime over the next few years. The Head teacher told me how many staff, on hearing about the impending closure, had either transferred to other schools or retired. Consequently the current staff were either new or were some of the more established staff who had been expecting to retire but had been persuaded to stay on. Even prior to the announcement that the school was to close there were problems with staffing due to a combination of senior staff secondment or ill health, thus the school had been existing in a climate of uncertainty without clear direction for a number of years.

The phenomenon of staff relaxing boundaries and expectations towards the end of term will be recognised by teachers, and is perhaps reminiscent of ‘gate-fever’ in other contexts (Goffman 1968, Buxton and Turner 1962). Once boundaries and expectations slip the process becomes very difficult to reverse. I suggest that with the closure of the school apparently imminent this ‘slippage’ had happened, only for staff to find that they had another possibly 2 or 3 years to go. It would be like a teacher thinking they’d reached the summer holidays only to discover on the last day that term had been extended by a few weeks. Given this overall context it is reasonable to suggest that staff might feel they had little control, and would not be inclined to make a personal investment in the effectiveness of the school. The pattern of development of the ethos of Hawthornbank that I am suggesting is represented in Figure 8.1. The next part of the ‘flow chart’ – the consequences of this ethos for the pupils experience of schooling will be discussed in the section on pupil groups below. In addition I will argue that a further consequence of staff feelings of ineffectiveness is the construction of the pupils as dangerous and ‘beyond help’.

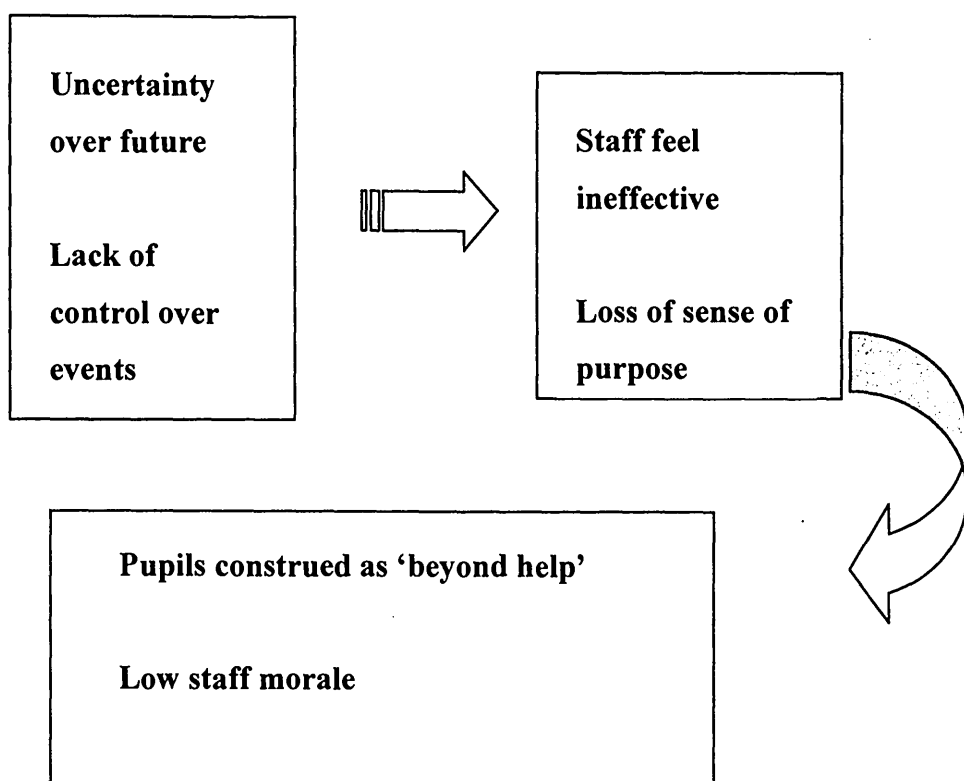


Figure 8.1: Production of school ethos at Hawthornbank

In contrast, Burnside had none of the staffing issues encountered by Hawthornbank. The majority of staff were long-term having taught there for over 10 years. The two most recent staff had arrived in the last 2 years, but both had come from other SEBD provision and thus while new to the school, were not inexperienced. The local authority in which Burnside is located was similarly undergoing a review of its special placement provision, however, unlike Hawthornbank there was an understanding that even if some changes were made there would still be a need for an educational provision on that site. Indeed the school had undergone a number of changes of remit since its opening in 1977 and many of the current staff had remained with it through those changes. Thus there was a sense of continuity. In addition although the remit had evolved the management of the school felt involved in the decision making process, rather than at the whim of local authority decisions [Field notes 23/5/03].

I am therefore arguing that the difference in ethos between the two schools can be explained, at least in part, by the impact of a climate of uncertainty and change around Hawthornbank. There is however an alternative explanation which should be mentioned, along with my reasons for rejecting it. It was stated at the outset that the two schools were selected because of differences in the curriculum they offered. Is it not possible then that the differences in ethos are directly related to the different curricular provision? Indeed, one of the original research questions was to find out if there was evidence for the argument that the provision of an alternative curriculum would improve school ethos as it would facilitate staff and pupils establishing positive relationships. This possible interpretation will now be examined.

Burnside was chosen because it offered an alternative curriculum, however this was only half the story. While the school did indeed offer the pupils the opportunity to participate in activities loosely described as 'outdoor education' it placed a very strong emphasis on the importance of the 'mainstream' curriculum. Most of the school week was taken up with formal lessons working towards certification in core subjects. It was not only the teachers who emphasised the importance of this, one commented 'it is really important that the young people follow certificated courses' [Field notes, 9/6/03], but also the pupils. For pupils although the alternative bits of the curriculum were fun and helped motivate them to attend, all of them were clear that 'schooling' was about the formal core subjects.

At Hawthornbank, which reported that it did not offer an alternative curriculum, the existing timetable had all afternoons listed as 'activities'. Pupils talked about making friendship bracelets, or bringing in tapes to listen to. The proposed new timetable for the following session showed all classes having all their afternoons time-tabled either for Outdoor education (1 afternoon per week per class) or 'Environmental Studies/ Expressive Arts/ Visits' (2 afternoons a week per class, sometimes with the Maths or English teacher) and Personal, Social and Health Education / Activities one afternoon. At Burnside pupils had one afternoon of 'choices', and could choose from the list of ICT, cookery, walking, PE, craft or games. A second afternoon was used for outdoor pursuits or football matches. The

other afternoons followed standard curriculum timetables. Thus, despite on paper following a more formal mainstream curriculum, Hawthornbank pupils spent more time in less formal lessons or activities than their Burnside counterparts.

In informal discussions with staff at Hawthornbank it was often said that they felt restricted in what they could offer their pupils because of the requirements to follow 5-14 guidelines. They felt that such core subjects were inappropriate for their pupils, but seemed unaware of the large amount of time they currently gave over to largely unstructured 'activities'. In contrast and despite talking about wanting to offer an alternative curriculum, when another professional working with Hayley suggested that she could go on placement to a local farm, to work towards certificates in animal husbandry, the school was very resistant [Field notes 30/6/03]. As with the term 'therapeutic', it seemed that the school had adopted the language of 'alternative curriculum' as a rationalisation for offering what appeared to be largely unstructured, unplanned, and un-assessed activities. In contrast the 'choices' on offer at Burnside often involved working towards certificates, and represented planned sequences of learning activities which involved progression and challenge. Once again my observations correlate with the comments made in inspection reports.

In conclusion, the pupils at Burnside spent less time in informal learning situations with their teachers than did the pupils at Hawthornbank, thus this does not stand up as an explanation of the differing quality of relationships in the two schools. In contrast I would argue that the different levels of staff morale in each school is manifested in the amount of planning and thought the staff teams invested in developing their 'activities' afternoons. The relationship between ethos and curriculum is clearly not a simple causal linear one. Curriculum will impact on ethos and vice versa, however what I am arguing is that this data suggests that, in these two schools, it is school ethos which is the more powerful factor.

2. Pupil groups

Having outlined what I consider to be the main difference between the two schools, patterns emerging between groups of pupils, will now be discussed. It is important to note that the interviews with some young people did not fit the overall pattern and these will be discussed later, along with a brief description of differences in responses between genders.

This section will consider patterns which emerged between the two pupil populations in respect to the research questions. In general, and with the exception of the three individuals discussed below, strong patterns were evident within school groups. Whereas the pupils at Burnside were much more united in their views across all areas, the Hawthornbank pupils tended to divide into two camps on some issues. This division and suggested reasons for it will form part of the following analysis.

2.1 Educational Experience

Key findings

- *Pupils report that class size is biggest difference.*
- *Level of difficulty of work is significant for pupils.*
- *Similarities with mainstream are important to pupils.*

Pupils report that class size is biggest difference.

In both schools and with all pupils, the first answer to the question 'What is different about this school?' was always the size of the classes. In some cases there was a little prompting asking pupils to think specifically about differences in their classrooms, but in many cases class size was offered up with no such prompting. There was almost unanimous approval for smaller classes, but for a range of reasons. Some pupils at both schools talk about noise level being better, although at Hawthornbank two pupils said the classes were noisier than at mainstream. Some liked that they don't have to wait so long for help. Hayley (Hawthornbank) and Barry (Burnside) said they thought they would not manage in mainstream because of

all the other young people in the room. The prospect of having to interact with such a number of different people seemed to make them very anxious.

While small classes are clearly a positive, the extent to which being educated in a smaller class may hamper reintegration to mainstream is a concern. Barry and Hayley appear to be in a comfort zone, both said they would not co-operate with any attempts to get them to return to mainstream. Similarly, the almost immediate attention available in a class of 4 or 6 could in no way be replicated in a mainstream class. For pupils who want to return to mainstream this is an issue, Jamie from Hawthornbank identified this as a problem, when he commented that in small classes there was too much help available and pupils became dependent on the teacher.

Level of difficulty of work is significant for pupils.

Pupils were asked whether their work was easy, difficult or about right. The majority of Burnside pupils thought the level of difficulty of their work was just right: not too easy and not so difficult that it couldn't be done. Once again it appeared important for these boys to be able to say this – RS500's comment that 'it's no goin' tae be a day in the park' seemed to be intended as evidence again that this was a 'normal' school in which hard work went on. However Robert, recently arrived from mainstream, thought that both the standard and quantity of work was very much lower.

For pupils at Hawthornbank also the attitude to work varied. Emma said she thought her teacher must think she was stupid because of the easy work he gave her – although later she talked proudly about the same teacher having told her she was 'really bright'. For others, particularly those who had been in separate provision for a number of years, the work was felt to be about right.

Given the background information that the inspection reports on both schools thought the curriculum offered insufficient challenge, and the conflicting views of pupils within the schools it is difficult to draw simple conclusions. It would appear that the impact of the level of work given to an individual pupil will depend greatly

on where the pupil is 'at' in terms of self esteem, as well on the comparisons available to them.

There are groups of pupils in both schools who say their work is at an appropriate level of difficulty. However I would argue that their reasons for arguing this are different. The Hawthornbank pupils who have been in special schools for years think that the standard of work that they are given is 'normal', they have nothing with which to compare it. The Burnside boys who say their work is at the right level do so out of an eagerness to defend their school and assert its parity with mainstream. Those who say the work is too easy tend to be those with most recent mainstream experience. The low standard of work given to Emma (5 months out of mainstream) doesn't change how she rates her own cleverness, but does say something to her about how she is seen by teachers. However Robert doesn't appear to have made the same link from being given easy work to believing that the teachers must think he is stupid, perhaps reflecting the more positive teacher/pupil relationships in his school.

Similarities with mainstream are important to pupils.

The importance of following a mainstream curriculum has been outlined above. In addition, and adding weight to the interpretation that even the disengaged pupils want to be in a 'normal' school, are the comments made by Hawthornbank pupils on the school day. The school had until very recently operated a system more like a primary school model with pupils in one class all morning with one teacher doing core subjects and working cross-curricularly. All the Hawthornbank pupils mentioned that they had recently moved to a 'secondary' model in which they moved around classrooms for different subject lessons. There was unanimous support for this change, some pupils talked about previously having become locked in disagreement with the one teacher. Others talked more generally about it being more like a proper school. While this seemed important to the pupils, and something which they identified as 'normal', it did appear to be giving staff additional worries as the increased movement around the school between classes provided an opportunity for undesirable behaviour.

2.2 Curriculum

Key Findings

- *Both schools have a restricted curriculum, some pupils are unhappy about this.*
- *An alternative curriculum can motivate pupils in some contexts.*
- *Following a mainstream, certificated curriculum is very important to pupils.*

Both schools have a restricted curriculum, some pupils are unhappy about this.

The traditional criticism of separate provision as discussed in chapter 2 under 'breadth', that it offers a restricted curriculum, appears to be supported by this research. Despite inspection reports of both schools in the recent past drawing attention to the lack of provision in some curriculum areas, major gaps persist. A number of factors, such as lack of specialist staff and lack of appropriate space or resources combine to make it difficult for secondary schools with small numbers of pupils to offer a wide range of subjects. It would also appear that those subjects most likely to be omitted fall into two distinct groups: those considered 'dry' and perhaps overly challenging for pupils (RE, a modern language) or those of a much more practical orientation, perhaps with a tendency to be more difficult to control (science, music, drama). What this study tells us is first that pupils in separate provision, even those who could not be categorised as engaged with education, are aware of the differences between what they are offered and what is on offer in mainstream. In addition, the withholding of a particular subject sends a message to pupils about what their teachers think them capable of. Third, such schools may be missing the opportunity to exploit the personal interests of young people in order to re-engage them with their schooling.

Whilst the inspectors drew attention to the lack of a formal music or drama programme at Hawthornbank, it was the absence of science which seemed to matter most to the pupils there. The inspection report on Burnside highlighted the lack of music, religious education and science. Subjects mentioned by pupils included modern languages, science, metalwork, music and Geography. While some of these subjects seem to reflect personal preferences, the predominance of science in pupil responses in both schools is interesting. Many of the young people made the

additional comment that they thought they were not allowed to do science because of safety concerns, this was also said about metalwork. At Hawthornbank in particular the pupils appeared to view the suggestion that they would not be able to behave responsibly in a practical class as a slight on their character, despite at other points in the interviews observing that their behaviour was not acceptable. This seems to me to be a good example of the kind of ‘vicious circle’ which a poor school ethos can foster, shown in Figure 8.2. I further suggest that this circle will operate independent of actual pupil behaviour as pupils never have the opportunity to either prove or disprove the teachers’ perceptions.

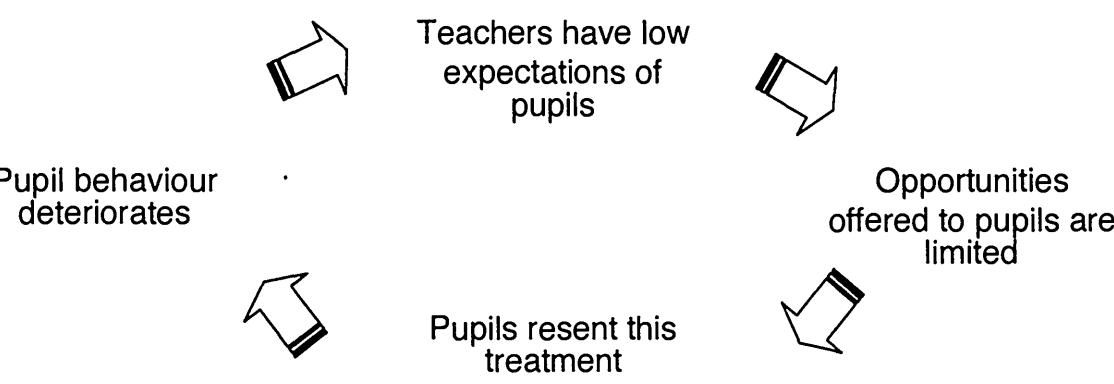


Figure 8.2 Teacher expectation and pupil behaviour

An alternative curriculum can motivate pupils in some contexts.

There is evidence from pupils in both schools to suggest that an alternative curriculum has value in engaging the interest of otherwise disaffected pupils. While Hayley, from Hawthornbank, was critical of the ‘just making friendship bracelets’ on activities afternoons, she was enthusiastic about the time she spent on a farm and talked about certificates she was working towards there. The school’s apparent reluctance to allow Hayley to do this work in school time appears to have further damaged the relationship she has with the adults there as she interpreted it as them deliberately trying to stop her from doing something she liked.

Barry, certainly the most lethargic and un-animated of the interviewees from Burnside, appeared to 'come to life' when talking about the outdoor activities and choices he was able to do at school. He said that such things were the best bits about Burnside, and that they were the reason he came to school. It may have been these 'extras' that persuaded Barry into coming to school but while he was there he was attaining passes at Access level 3 in Basic Cookery Skills, English Language Study, English Literacy Study, Maths: Using Maths 1 and HE: Safe Hygienic Practices.

For Scott too the choices on offer were a great motivator. He saw them as things to work towards, knowing that being trusted to go out on activities would depend on behaviour in more formal lessons. For Scott it was not simply a matter of behaving so he would get to go out; for him the real target was managing his behaviour, the choices functioned as something which helped him keep focused on achieving his target by providing an added incentive.

Following a mainstream, certificated curriculum is very important to pupils.

All of the Burnside pupils were firm in their view that their school was just like any other and the evidence they used for this was that they got to do the same subjects and exams. When asked if they thought they would be disadvantaged when applying to college or looking for a job by being educated in a 'different' school they all said no, because they did the same work. For these pupils the alternative curriculum on offer was clearly an 'extra', not part of their formal school work. The assertion that they did the same work as mainstream pupils seemed to be very important to these boys, it was their way of holding on to a sense of 'normalcy' and this was encouraged by the teaching staff. Some subject areas were noted to be different to mainstream – in particular Art and PE where different materials/activities were available. Scott talked about getting more appropriate material to work on in English, poems and stories that he could relate to. However for these pupils these differences were seen as inconsequential or indeed as improvements.

The majority of the Hawthornbank pupils gave the impression of being disengaged with their education. They did not talk about the importance of exams, or future college and employment plans. Given this attitude, the surprising finding was that they were interested in talking about curriculum issues (whereas some topics received one word answers, in general curriculum was something which elicited more detail). Overall the comments made were not positive, and as argued above, part of this will be explained by the prevailing ethos in the school which generated a critical, negative attitude to most things.

Some Hawthornbank pupils talked about the work being very different. They often then went on to say something along the lines of 'but I don't care', although this often had an air of deliberately maintaining a posture about it. Thus, despite following a 'mainstream' curriculum, at least in the mornings, these pupils talked more in terms of difference rather than similarity to mainstream schoolwork. The aspect of this which I find most telling is that these differences really did seem to bother them. It was as if these curricular issues were yet another indication to them that they weren't in a 'normal' school. The exception to this was Alex who said he thought the subjects were about the same as he would get in a mainstream school. However it has to be remembered that Alex had been in separate education since Primary 5 and thus his knowledge of a mainstream secondary curriculum may be limited.

In conclusion, many of the themes identified in chapter 2 also emerged from the data in this study. Pupils' views on the importance of breadth in the curriculum and of opportunities for certification were discussed above. In relation to the notion of 'specialness', findings from this study would support those of Lund (1992) on the importance of maintaining an emphasis on individual needs and relationships and the importance of success. The evidence from this research is that it is possible, as at Burnside, to do so whilst delivering a largely mainstream standard curriculum. Finally, in relation to self-esteem, the dilemma identified in chapter 2 is the tension between giving pupils an alternative curriculum in which they can succeed, but which at the same time makes them feel different to mainstream peers. The data

from this research suggests that there is an alternative: giving pupils a mainstream curriculum, set at an appropriately challenging level and at which pupils can succeed. The suggestion is that it is a mistake to assume that pupils in SEBD provision will not be able to engage with or experience success in mainstream subjects.

2.3 Ethos

Key Findings:

- *School ethos has a significant impact on reported pupil experience.*
- *School ethos has a significant impact on pupil behaviour.*

School ethos has a significant impact on reported pupil experience

The very different ethos in each school has been described in detail above. It was argued that the most significant difference between these schools lies in the area of ethos rather than curriculum. In this section the supplementary view, that it is school ethos and not curriculum which is most influential in determining these pupils' experience of separate provision, will be put forward.

The interview data presented in the previous chapter clearly illustrates the different pupil perceptions of their school. Whereas the pupils at Hawthornbank were largely contemptuous of the school, often of the teachers, and sometimes of their peers, Burnside pupils all had positive things to say about the school, the teachers and the other pupils. It would appear that the ethos of each school was having an impact on the pupils' perception of all aspects of their educational experience, not simply on matters directly related to ethos.

For example, pupils in both schools mentioned subjects which they did not get in separate provision, or subjects which, although called the same name, were very different. However for the boys at Burnside this was information that was only given up after repeated questioning, but in the Hawthornbank interviews pupils were eager to volunteer their criticisms. It seems that despite the Hawthornbank pupils generally being much less engaged with, or interested in, their education than the

Burnside pupils they were far more ready to be critical of the education that was on offer. In general, the young people who talked about feeling respected and treated fairly were much more positive about all features of their schooling than were those who talked in more negative terms about aspects of the school ethos. Therefore ethos appears to have a strong influence on pupils' perceptions of their schools; and I will argue that their behaviour as well as beliefs are affected.

School ethos has a significant impact on pupil behaviour

It is clear that for most of the pupils at Hawthornbank their perception is that the behaviour of their fellow pupil is 'not normal', and many report deterioration in their own behaviour since coming to the school. In contrast most of the Burnside pupils (with the exception of Robert) talk in terms of their own behaviour having improved and standards of behaviour in general being higher. The question then arises as to whether the perception of these pupils is reflected in observed behaviour.

It would be unreasonable to make generalisations about pupil behaviour simply on the basis of a few days' visits, especially as they came towards the end of term when behaviour can deteriorate, or indeed improve as the pupil population declines. However in addition to this are comments from inspection reports, noted above, and the behaviour of individual pupils on a 1:1 basis. The conduct of the young people during the interviews was discussed in chapter 6. The pupil perceptions of behaviour are congruent with comments in HMI reports, my own observations during my visits to schools and with conduct during individual pupil interviews.

The mechanism of how ethos affects behaviour can perhaps be explained by looking at peer relationships. Two of the girls interviewed at Hawthornbank talked about having to act tough when they first came to the school, otherwise they would get a battering. Indeed there seemed to be a lot of posturing going on during my visit with young people exchanging verbal threats and making displays of their 'dangerousness' through physical violence towards property, refusal to accept adult authority and demonstration that they did not follow the school rules. Pupils in Hawthornbank, both boys and girls talked about being scared of others.

Interestingly, they named each other, that is, with the exception of one pupil who was mentioned by nearly everyone as frightening, almost all the pupils were mentioned by at least one other as a potential danger. It would appear that the level of disruption and violence permitted in the school led to new arrivals rapidly adopting similar behaviour as a self-preservation technique.

In contrast none of the Burnside boys talked about being scared. When pushed as to what would happen if a pupil 'lost it' they replied that the teachers would take control and keep them safe. There appeared to be a culture of refusal to tolerate bullying at Burnside among the majority of pupils, many of whom talked about being bullied in mainstream. The exception to this is Arteta who reported being bullied in all schools and Robert who talked about Burnside having a much higher tolerance for disruptive behaviour than his previous school. It is important to note that Robert talks about the general level of behaviour being worse (pupils being off task, shouting out, swearing) but doesn't talk about a high frequency of serious incidents of indiscipline. Pupils at Burnside appear to view their own behaviour as something that was caused by circumstances - usually the actions of a mainstream teacher - not by them being 'bad'; now that they are in different circumstances they believe that their behaviour can, and has improved. For these boys this way of thinking appears to be, at least in part, influenced by their perception that the Burnside teachers like them, treat them with respect and are fair – and that when they are treated in this way their behaviour is appropriate.

The alternative interpretation, that it is the behaviour of pupils which impacts on ethos and not the reverse must be considered. The notion that working with a group of extremely challenging and disaffected youngsters will have a negative impact on staff morale has much intuitive credibility. And indeed I would support the view that as with curriculum and ethos, pupil behaviour and ethos do not lie in a simple linear causal relationship. However, the evidence presented at the beginning of this chapter suggested that the two pupil groups do not vary widely in terms of previous reported behaviour or level of difficulty. Thus, this alternative explanation for the higher level of disruptive behaviour at Hawthornbank does not stand.

In conclusion, the themes identified in chapter 2 as emerging from existing studies on ethos in schools for pupils with SEBD were also evident in this research. The way of categorising institutions according to the method of control, suggested by Millham *et al.* (1975), could be applied to Burnside and Hawthornbank. Burnside seems typical of a school in which there are clear institutional goals shared by pupils and staff and in which there are positive relationships between adults and young people. This school could be characterised as having a high degree of structure within which there is flexibility (Cole *et al.* 1998). In contrast, Hawthornbank attempts to use control through relationships, but in the absence of the necessary trusting relationships between most adults and young people this is exhausting for staff and ineffective.

2.4 Stigma

Key findings:

- *Most pupils reject the notion of being labelled by placement in separate provision and there is evidence of re-signification in some pupils.*
- *Pupil self-image is related to school ethos, including the views of staff, but some pupils resist internalisation of negative views.*
- *Maintaining links with mainstream peers seems to be significant in resisting internalisation of negative views.*
- *Young people cope with placement in separate provision in different ways.*

Most pupils reject the notion of being labelled by placement in separate provision and there is evidence of re-signification in some pupils.

The boys at Burnside rejected the suggestion that by attending a special school they had acquired a 'label' or 'got a name for themselves'. All but one of them talked about their own behaviour having improved since they came to the school; they saw themselves as more able to cope and to manage their behaviour. In addition, most of

the boys talk about the other pupils as being normal, just like themselves, but with difficulties.

It seems that these pupils did not feel they belonged in mainstream school, some talk about having been labelled there, always getting the blame for things and not being given a chance. On arriving at Burnside they have found themselves with a group of other young people who they can relate to and in whom they can see themselves; they no longer 'stick out' as different. There is an overwhelming sense of relief underlying the talk of many of these young people; the impression gained is that Burnside is a welcome respite from the trials and tribulations of mainstream school. They have found somewhere they feel they 'belong' and fit in.

On the issue of what others think of them coming to the school there are mixed responses. Interestingly, despite the assertions of most of the boys that their friends and families all know and understand, and that they don't care what other people think, nearly half of them said they wouldn't tell someone that they were attending a 'special school'. This suggests that perhaps on some level there is an awareness that they may be judged because of their placement. Perhaps the rejection of the suggestion of being labelled is fuelled, at least in part, by a combination of wishful thinking and the already noted tendency of these boys to avoid saying anything negative about their school. Indeed both Caimbeul and Robert show some awareness that at some time in the future the fact that they have been in separate provision might be held against them.

An interesting feature of the conversation of some Hawthornbank pupils is their use of a medical discourse to explain their placement. In contrast to the Burnside pupils many of them present themselves as 'not normal' or ill, and not able to control their behaviour. There is no sense from these young people of them working on taking responsibility for themselves or of trying to make changes. Some pupils talk about their behaviour having got worse, those who say they have calmed down attribute this change to medication. The link between the increasing medicalisation of disruptive behaviour and pupils not being held accountable for their actions is

discussed by Tait (2003). It appears that some of the Hawthornbank pupils have indeed 'bought in' to explanations for their difficulties which emphasise their helplessness and lack of responsibility.

This pupil group is split in terms of whether they express a sense of belonging or fitting in to Hawthornbank. For some the school is clearly not for them, but is for the other pupils who are seen as not 'normal'. However others say that it is the right place for them because they couldn't manage anywhere else. It seems that some pupils look around them and see the disruptive behaviour and lack of control and think 'yes that's me' whereas others see the same thing and don't recognise themselves. In the case of the former group the opportunity for positive re-signification of the type in evidence at Burnside is clearly absent. For the other pupils who feel they don't belong it may be that being placed in this school has indeed sharpened up their sense of their own normalcy in comparison with what they see in their fellow pupils. It should be noted, however, that those Hawthornbank pupils who said they weren't like the others there had still adopted the behaviour of the others whom they described as 'not normal'.

Like the pupils at Burnside the Hawthornbank pupils rejected the suggestion that they might be labelled because of attending the school. However some did talk about being bullied by both young people outside the school and family members. It seemed that their rejection of the suggestion of labelling took a different form from that of the Burnside pupils. The tendency of the Hawthornbank pupils to present a tough image in pursuit of self-preservation has been noted above and this was reflected in the confident swagger of a section of the Hawthornbank interviewees. When these pupils talked about not having any trouble with people outside school there was an implied 'they wouldn't dare, nobody gives me any trouble'. In contrast the Burnside pupils did not seem to have as much investment in maintaining a tough image. Once again the possibility arises that the low reported level of labelling is a conservative estimate. Indeed, the lengths to which some interviewees (Larsson in particular) went to make sure I got the message that they were not like the other

pupils but were 'normal' implies that at some level some pupils are aware that people may make assumptions about them because of the school they attend.

Pupil self-image is related to school ethos, including views of staff, but some pupils resist internalisation of negative views.

It should be clear from the data presented in the previous chapter and from the section above that the two pupil groups differ in terms of their self-image, and that the Hawthornbank pupils form much less of a homogenous group. I suggested earlier that one consequence of the ethos in Hawthornbank was that pupils were construed by staff as dangerous and beyond help. This is in contrast to Burnside where staff felt able to effect change, and pupils were seen as being able to be helped to move forward. These two parallel ways of construing pupils who acquire the label SEBD mirror the punishment/ treatment dichotomy discussed in chapter 1 and relate to the different ways of constructing children discussed in chapter 3. I am suggesting that in some situations external pressures, for example insecurity in the future of provision, will be powerful in determining which one of these constructions of pupils with SEBD dominates. I further argue that there appears to be a connection between how staff feel about the pupils and how the pupils feel about themselves.

I suggest that in Hawthornbank, adult feelings of ineffectiveness have been projected onto the pupils who are then construed either as dangerous or beyond help. Evidence that this construction dominates lies in the negative comments made by some staff about pupils, pupils' reports of school work which is not challenging, and finally the assertion by some pupils that the teachers do not like them. It would appear from the data that some of the pupils have internalised these judgements about themselves, their use of the medical discourse and assertions that they are not normal and can't behave is evidence of this. In contrast I would argue that the more coherent sense of purpose, clearer goals and a greater feeling of effectiveness among the Burnside staff are projected onto, and affect the ways in which they see, their pupils. Again the data from interviews with pupils suggests that the views and attitudes of the staff

influence the pupils’ views of the school and of themselves. In particular, the recurring theme of mutual respect in the Burnside interviews is significant. This analysis fits with what would be predicted from a symbolic interactionist perspective – that individuals internalise the reflected appraisal of others.

However, the data does not suggest a simple link between adult perceptions and pupil self-image. Whilst the pupils at Burnside certainly seem to have a consistent image of themselves as basically good people who have experienced difficulties and are now working on sorting things out, the pupil group at Hawthornbank cannot be so simply analysed. The key elements in how the young people see themselves seem to be how they see the others in the school, and whether they think they are the same or different, as shown in Table 8.1.

	I’m like others in the school	I’m different to the others in the school
Other pupils are not ‘normal’	Jacky, Hayley	Marie, Larsson, Emma, Jamie
Other pupils are ‘normal’	All Burnside pupils; +Alex	

Table 8. 2 Pupils’ perceptions

Of all the Hawthornbank pupils it is Marie who is most difficult to categorise in this way. The view she expressed can more accurately be described as ‘I’m not normal and neither are the others, but I’m not normal in a different way – I’m not like them’. It would appear that Larsson, Jamie and Emma have been able to hold on to a sense of themselves as ‘normal’ in a way that the others have not. Although Alex and the Burnside pupils ‘share a square’ it should be noted that their experience is very different. The peer groups to which they are expressing a feeling of belonging exhibit very different levels of behaviour. Indeed Alex is the only one of the Hawthornbank pupils who sees his peers as ‘normal’.

Maintaining links with mainstream peers seems to be significant in resisting internalisation of negative views.

How can the different perceptions of the Hawthornbank pupils be explained? It seems reasonable to suppose that personality and individual circumstance will have some role in determining how an individual will respond to finding themselves in such a school. However there is another possible contributing factor which I believe is key. Larsson, Emma and Jamie, the three Hawthornbank pupils who maintained a sense of themselves as 'normal' all talked about their friends outside the school. None of the other Hawthornbank pupils talked in this way. These three pupils had sustained friendship with former mainstream peers or with young people in their neighbourhood who attended mainstream school. In symbolic interactionist terms I am suggesting that the significant factor is that these three pupils had an alternative reference group interaction which helped to form their sense of themselves. For the Burnside pupils the staff team acts as a reference group promoting a positive self, for Larsson, Emma and Jamie their friends outside school take on this role. However for Jacky, Hayley and Alex the only available reference groups appear to be the staff or their fellow pupils at Hawthornbank – neither of which provide the same potential for developing a positive self-image.

Young people cope with placement in separate provision in different ways.

Literature on the response of individuals to placement in an institution, or to acquiring a 'deviant' label often focus on the socialization into a 'deviant identity' or on other forms of coping strategies (Becker 1963, Goffmann 1968). However the experience of the pupils interviewed for this study appears not to fit neatly into an existing model.

The pupils at Burnside do indeed convey a strong sense of solidarity and group identity – they talk about each other as friends, and about feeling that they belong in the school. However the data does not support the interpretation that they have acquired a 'deviant identity'. None of the boys present themselves (verbally or non-verbally) as 'bad' or 'disruptive', although they talk about having been so in the past.

If anything there is more evidence to suggest the opposite is the case; that by coming to Burnside they have been socialised into a different, more positive identity. There is no evidence to suggest the existence of a Burnside pupil group culture which is in opposition to the overall culture of the school. Rather the pupils and teachers appear to share a common value system and perception of the school.

The pupils at Hawthornbank appear to fit more obviously into the model of socialization into a 'deviant identity'. A brief visit to the school would probably convey the impression that the pupil group was cohesive and bound together by its opposition to the formal school culture. However, on closer examination difficulties with this interpretation arise. First, although all (except Marie) pupils appear to have opted in to a presentation of themselves as disinterested, tough, and perhaps even dangerous, the interview data revealed that for some pupils this was something of a sham. Many of them talked about being scared of other pupils, wanting teachers to take more control and had concerns about the education that they were receiving. This was truer of some than of others. The data suggests that while Jamie, Larsson and Emma appeared to be merely 'wearing the cloak' of Hawthornbank pupil subculture, and were keen to distinguish themselves from their peers during their interviews, Hayley, Alex and Jacky seemed to have become more deeply enmeshed in the subculture to the extent that they expressed feelings of belonging to it. Second, the extent to which the pupil subculture stands in opposition to that of the school can be questioned. I would argue that, as in Burnside, the pupil group at Hawthornbank actually share very similar values and attitudes to the staff group. In the absence of formal interviews with staff evidence for this assertion is limited; however in support of this interpretation I would point to the low staff morale, apparent absence of pride in or loyalty to the school, and the attitudes towards pupils expressed by some staff.

While each of these different ways of adapting to being in separate provision will bring with it positives, there will also be potentially serious consequences. For the Burnside pupils who feel that they belong and have found themselves among their equals at last, the concern is that the norms of the group to which they feel this

loyalty are to a large extent not the norms of wider society. While in the short-term there are obvious advantages in terms of promoting positive self-image, the question arises as to whether the sense of normalcy which they are developing will be able to persist once they leave the school, and indeed whether it may limit possible future integration into wider society.

For the Hawthornbank 'cloak wearers', there is the possibility, mentioned above, that in distinguishing themselves from the other pupils they sharpen up their perception of what is 'normal' and the sense that they fit this description. However there is the possibility that by adopting the attitudes and behaviours of Hawthornbank they are judged by adults as not being ready for re-integration to mainstream, which is their stated aim. For the final group, those who appear to have internalised the values and attitudes of Hawthornbank, once again there is a positive aspect in that they have found somewhere they feel they belong. However this appears to be at the price of construing themselves in highly negative ways.

In conclusion, the literature review in chapter 2 identified a number of closely related issues relating to stigmatisation. It was suggested that what determines whether a pupil feels stigmatised by their educational placement and internalises negative perceptions is the extent to which they accept their placement and identify with it, those who identify closely being able to resist the negative opinions of others. However it is not simply the extent to which a pupil identifies with the school which is important, but also how the pupil experiences the school. Pupils who identify with a school which has clear shared goals, high expectations and good staff/pupil relationships are more likely to think highly of themselves than pupils in a school without those features. Pupils may be able to resist the negative views of 'outsiders' but it would appear that the negative views of staff are more difficult to resist, particularly in the absence of an alternative reference group.

This research has focused primarily on the extent to which pupils in these schools currently feel in relation to stigmatisation. However in terms of 'life-chances' it seems to me to be equally important to consider the extent to which they will be

stigmatised in adult life because of their placement in separate provision. A small number of pupils interviewed had considered this possibility, but further longitudinal research with former pupils would be required to discover what their actual experiences will be.

3. Gender

I have included a section on gender because not to do so would seem remiss given what is known about young women's different experiences of being labelled as having SEBD. However, the data from this research does not lend itself to analysis along gender difference lines. Three girls were interviewed, all from Hawthornbank: Marie, Hayley and Emma. It may be that had girls been available to be interviewed at Burnside that more differences between the genders would have emerged.

While the responses of the three girls did not fall into any neat pattern -Marie as described above is very much an individual, Emma's views overlapped with those of Jamie and Larsson, and Hayley's responses were more similar to those of Jacky, and Alex – there were certainly differences apparent in how the staff talked about the girls, in comparison with the boys.

Staff at Hawthornbank viewed Hayley and Emma as outspoken, confident and brighter than the boys. And indeed the three girls were the most vocal of the pupils at Hawthornbank. All gave long interviews, Hayley and Marie's both lasted over 45 minutes compared with an average of nearer 20 minutes for that school. However the tendency to equate verbosity with intelligence should, I suggest be resisted. I found the comments of some of the Hawthornbank boys to be more reasoned and reflective than those of the girls. Although this data does not in itself provide enough evidence for any explanation, I consider it is possible that staff gender stereotypes of pupils in SEBD provision may be having a self-fulfilling effect. In short the girls are 'allowed' to be bright, whereas the boys are expected to be low achievers. Of course such a hypothesis requires further research into attitudes of teaching staff to pupils of different genders.

4. Individuals

The three individuals whose views differed most from that of the other pupils in the same school are Marie and Jamie from Hawthornbank and Robert from Burnside. Although all pupils of course had their own individual experiences and opinions to report, in general terms the other interviewees tended to fall into patterns of responses.

4.1 Marie

Marie's perspective on her placement at Hawthornbank differed in many respects from those of the other pupils, although there were some similarities. Like most of the others Marie talked about the behaviour of pupils as very poor, she thought teachers should be more strict, reported that some teachers lost control, talked about extensive bullying in the school, and said she didn't like missing 'mainstream' subjects like science. In contrast with the other pupils Marie did talk about liking the school and liking the teachers who she said were her friends. Marie felt that she was correctly placed at the school (which she described as being for people who need help with their work), but she wanted all the others to leave. She perceived the other young people as imposters who pretended to have problems so they would be sent to the school in order to bully people like her.

It is not only in her opinions that Marie differed from the other pupils. Her level of cognitive functioning was said to be poor, she had a record of needs and there were unconfirmed diagnoses of dyspraxia and other motor difficulties. Staff in the school felt she was inappropriately placed and would be better suited to a school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, the referral process for which had been started. Marie's different take on Hawthornbank can, I believe be related to her different level of understanding and awareness of her environment. In addition it seemed to me that the teachers felt differently about Marie, she was not seen as one of the crowd, but rather as their victim. Indeed it is possible that staff felt a degree of solidarity with her in this role. This might explain the more positive relationships

with staff which Marie reported. The different staff perception of Marie echoes with Benjamin's (2002b) findings reported in chapter 1 of schools constructing pupils with different types of needs in different ways.

4.2 Jamie and Robert

The two other pupils who don't generally follow the pattern of responses in their respective schools are Jamie (Hawthornbank) and Robert (Burnside). While Robert's comments on many topics are significantly different from those of all the other Burnside pupils, Jamie's are similar in many regards to the opinions expressed by Emma and Larsson. However, while similarities exist, his views are different enough to merit individual consideration.

Although Jamie and Robert do not follow their school pattern they do fall into something of a pattern of their own. They both talk about their school work being too easy and there not being enough of it. Jamie is concerned he may not get the qualifications he needs to be a scaffolder, he is the only pupil from Hawthornbank to talk about his future career aspirations and what he will need to do to get there. Both are quick to identify 'mainstream' subjects which they don't get: Geography and Music for Robert and Science and Italian for Jamie. Both young men say that behaviour in the school is much worse than in mainstream, while this fits with other pupils' response at Hawthornbank this is unlike the views of most other Burnside pupils, most of whom say behaviour at Burnside is less aggressive or less annoying. Jamie is clear that the other pupils in Hawthornbank are not his friends, and Robert does not talk about the other Burnside pupils in the positive terms that many of his schoolmates do. Finally, Jamie and Robert both want to be at mainstream school.

The main areas in which Robert and Jamie's responses differ are therefore in relation to comparisons with mainstream education, particularly in relation to quality of education and level of behaviour. While of course individual characteristics, personality and preferences are likely to lie behind some of their different views; I believe it is significant that both of these pupils are the most recent arrivals at their

schools, having come from mainstream school in the last 4 months (Jamie) and 1 month (Robert). If the hypothesis is that recent mainstream experience affects perception of separate provision then the responses of other pupils with recent mainstream experience must also be examined.

4.3 Other recent arrivals

Emma was another relatively new arrival, having come to Hawthornbank from mainstream secondary five months ago, and indeed her responses are similar to those of Jamie, in particular in relation to her contempt of the education on offer at Hawthornbank. I consider that what sets Jamie apart from Emma is his investment in education. While Emma is happy to criticise the school she is critical of all aspects; Jamie however focuses in on education, saying he would like to get homework and talking about the need to get good exams. In contrast to Emma's almost blanket disapproval of all Hawthornbank has to offer, Jamie is able to make positive (though qualified) comments about the teachers at Hawthornbank. Steve was another recent arrival, having been at Burnside for only three months. He seemed to be much happier to be there, had no issues with the curriculum and thought behaviour was better than at mainstream. It is perhaps relevant that Steve reported having a very unhappy time in mainstream and being the victim of substantial bullying; overall Steve gave the impression of being very relieved to be away from his mainstream school.

It would appear then that other pupils who have recent mainstream experience seem more rapidly to have adopted the prevailing views of their peer groups. However this does not disprove the interpretation that recent mainstream experience influences perception of separate provision, although it does suggest that individual circumstances and attitudes can go some way to explaining this difference in rates of 'acclimatisation'.

Therefore this analysis raises the issue of distance (in terms of time) from mainstream education altering a pupil's perception of what constitutes 'normal', both

in terms of educational standards and appropriate levels of behaviour. Robert's responses are particularly significant here as they are in such contrast to those of his schoolmates, in particular in relation to the acceptable standard of behaviour at Burnside compared with mainstream.

Conclusion

A number of important issues have arisen from this analysis which require further discussion. These will be addressed in the following chapter which will contextualise them in the 'bigger picture' of separate provision which emerged from the questionnaire. These important issues can be arranged under the following headings: separateness, diversity and vulnerability.

Chapter 9

Introduction

In this chapter the focus shifts out to enable a wider view to be taken. It brings together key findings from both studies with some of the themes which were identified in the three more theoretical chapters. The result is a ‘snap-shot’ of the state of separate provision for pupils with SEBD in Scotland today and the experience of pupils in it. The limitations of generalising from the two schools in study 2 have already been addressed. However, as this chapter will demonstrate, many of the issues identified in study 2 resonate strongly with findings from the much more representative questionnaire, with issues identified in chapter 1 which explored the historical and legislative context of such provision, as well as with existing research.

While earlier chapters have focussed on quite specific questions relating to issues such as pupil population, purpose of schools, ethos, curriculum, and stigmatisation there are two fundamental questions which underpin the entire thesis. They are, ‘What is the nature of separate provision for pupils with SEBD in Scotland?’ and, ‘What is life like for the pupils who attend these schools?’. These are the questions which this more discursive chapter will seek to address. In working through the answers to both questions three themes emerged as fundamental in thinking about both provision and pupil experience: *diversity*, *separateness* and *vulnerability*. This chapter will therefore comprise an examination of these three organising ideas and show how they can help draw together some of the key elements of the preceding chapters. This discussion will then go on to consider implications for practice and indications of future research required.

1. Diversity

In this section I will argue that both the pupil population and the sector are diverse. Although this diversity is evident on a number of characteristics, I will argue that those relating specifically to educational factors should be given most consideration. Diversity in the pupil population is evident, although within some limits. In chapter 5 it was shown that some pupils and pupil backgrounds are over-represented in separate provision. Boys, pupils of secondary age, pupils from families living in poverty and pupils from single parent or reconstituted families are more likely to be referred to this sector. Pupils with learning difficulties are also over represented, with 10% of boys having moderate learning difficulties. This compares with around 0.7% of the mainstream school population in the 2002 census identified as having MLD. In addition, although the numbers of pupils reintegrating to mainstream is small (82 in last 3 years), one in 12 of the pupils spent some portion of their week in a mainstream school. Therefore it is clear that there are a significant proportion of pupils who have particular needs or education programs which will differ significantly from those of their fellow pupils.

It can therefore be argued that there is a particular type of 'limited diversity' among the pupil population of this sector evident from the questionnaire. By this I mean that while the pupil population is taken largely from a narrow slice of wider society, within this there is great diversity on factors of educational significance. This view is strengthened when the pupils in the two case study schools are considered. The expected pattern in terms of gender, family, and socio economic backgrounds was evident in this group of pupils. However within these limits the pupils varied widely in terms of their learning ability from those considered to have learning difficulties (e.g., Marie) through to those who were thought to be of high ability (e.g., Caimbeul and Hayley). Similarly, in terms of pupil views on reintegration to mainstream, in both schools there were some pupils who rejected it as ever being a possibility and others who were actively seeking, or at least hoping for, reintegration.

The profile of the pupil population of separate provision in Scotland in terms of gender, age, socio-economic background is as would be predicted from existing

literature. As was outlined in chapter 3, different explanations have been offered of how individuals come to be identified as having SEBD, these explanations vary according to whether it is structural factors or individual agency which is said to be responsible. Furlong (1985) notes that explanations linking class background and identification as 'deviant' take different forms, with 'status frustration', 'cultural conflict' or 'reproduction and resistance' as key ideas. These explanations see pupils from a particular background as either not able to achieve educationally, not valuing education or being identified as not having the potential to contribute to the workforce. What is interesting to note from the research in this thesis is that the pupils value education and certification, some of them are very able and many talk about ambitions relating to employment. These findings are similar to those from other studies concerned with interrupted learners of all types (Jordan and Padfield 2004, Khan, 2003). In addition the pupils tell us that it is not the schoolwork that is the problem in mainstream, it is the attitude of the teachers towards them, once again echoing findings from other studies (Garner 1993, Wise 1999). This doesn't necessarily negate the explanations linking class background and identification as deviant, but it does suggest that differences in educational ability and the value attached to education are not necessarily the most significant factors.

A further challenge to these structural explanations is the construction of the pupils as passive victims, something which they themselves reject. As Tattum (1982) found the pupils talk openly about their own misbehaviour in school, and justifications for it, in terms of not being respected or listened to. Whilst they talk about being unfairly labelled, they also talk about having chosen to behave in the way they do. An explanation which allows for more individual agency is found in the realist position on structure and agency adopted in this thesis which sees individuals as intentional actors (Hay 1995), but asserts that they choose to act the way they do because of their experience as an inhabitant of a particular structural location. The symbolic interactionist perspective outlined in chapter 3 also sees individuals as intentional actors whose behaviour is dependent upon their understanding of a situation.

An alternative explanation which allows for more agency and also accounts for the notion that conflicting values other than those relating to education may be, at least in part, implicated in the identification of some pupils as 'deviant' is made by Bird *et al.* (1981). This study of disaffected pupils in mainstream school suggests that there may be a clash between the roles pupils play outside school, often with responsibilities, and those they are expected to adopt as subservient pupils. If it is indeed the case that at least some of the conflicts between individuals and school are caused by pupils feeling they are not respected, rather than a lack of engagement with education, the implication is that policy makers should be giving as much attention to promoting practices which allow pupils real responsibility in schools as to curriculum flexibility. Dwyfor Davies (2005) highlights the importance to pupils with SEBD of being provided with the opportunity to take responsibility in schools, and notes that guidance on this currently falls short of statutory obligation. While Dwyfor Davies is commenting on the situation in England and Wales, the same is currently true in Scotland.

Turning from the pupils to the provision, as the questionnaire findings demonstrate there is wide diversity across almost every variable including management, history, purpose, pupil population, and curriculum. It would appear that whilst each school will have been responding to similar wider pressures, rather than developing to form an homogenous sector, each individual institution has developed along its own trajectory with individual characteristics being retained. In chapter 1, which examined the development of provision for pupils with SEBD in Scotland, reference was made to Garland's (1990) view of institutions as tending to generate a sense of their own inevitability, and this might go some way to explaining the continuing high degree of diversity identified by the questionnaire. It is perhaps surprising that given such a diverse range of provision all of these schools have high occupancy rates. It might be predicted that some types of provision would prove more popular than others. Possible explanations for a continuing demand for places in such schools, regardless of their individual characteristics, were discussed in chapter 5 in which the tensions between policies directed at inclusion on the one hand, and zero tolerance of

indiscipline on the other, were seen as at least in part responsible for maintaining the special school population.

2. *Separateness*

As with *diversity* I will argue that *separateness* characterises both the sector and the pupil experience. The question of the stigmatisation of pupils in separate provision was discussed in chapter 8. Whether or not a pupil reported feeling stigmatised seemed to be a result of the interplay of a number of factors, mainly the extent to which they felt they belonged in the separate school, and whether they maintained relationships with mainstream peers. I would argue that whether or not pupils report feeling stigmatised, they are all, and in more than simply locational terms, *apart* from mainstream education. This can be demonstrated by looking at the pupils interviewed in three groups who report slightly different experiences.

The first group of pupils are those in Hawthornbank who maintained a sense of themselves as 'normal' and felt they belonged in mainstream school; these pupils were perhaps the unhappiest that I spoke to. They felt they didn't belong where they were but were being prevented from being where they wanted to be. They were separate not only in practice from their mainstream peers but also in essence from the other pupils in separate provision. Despite being unhappy with their current placement, it is this group of pupils who seem to me to have, at least potentially, a good long term outcome in terms of inclusion into adult society. They have retained a sense of what is 'normal' and express the wish to belong to it.

The second group of pupils in Hawthornbank, those who felt they belonged there, opted in to the description of themselves as needing to be educated apart from ordinary children. In particular they appeared to accept the medicalisation of their difficulties, using this as an explanation for their behaviour. The increasing tendency to medicalise children presenting difficulties in schools has been noted in chapter 3; the implications of this for the abrogation of individual responsibility is discussed by Tait (2003). These pupils seemed to almost relish this view of themselves as not the

same as 'normal' children. They presented as being happier than the other group of pupils in Hawthornbank, perhaps because they felt that they were where they belonged. While short-term happiness of pupils is of course important, it surely needs to be balanced against long-term outcomes. The possibility of this group of pupils, with the views of themselves which they carry, integrating happily into adult society seems limited.

The Burnside pupils, apart from the most recent arrival, also seemed happy with their situation. They felt that they were in a place where they belonged and wanted to be. Many of them had experienced mainstream schools as hostile places and had no wish to return. Added to that was their view that the education they were receiving was as good as, if not better than, that which they would have at mainstream. But these pupils too are separated by more than where they get their education. While they may speak in glowing terms about their schooling, the reality is that the opportunities offered to them in terms of range of subjects and opportunity for certification are limited. Despite this school being viewed as improving by the inspectors it was still felt not to offer an appropriately challenging curriculum, this view was echoed by the most recent pupil arrival. This limited education is however not the biggest concern in terms of the long-term outlook for these pupils. Of more concern is the way in which these pupils talk about their current situation as 'normal' in terms of behaviour as well as education. They do indeed appear to have experienced re-signification as described by Cooper (1993a), feeling better about themselves in separate provision than they did in mainstream, but this seems to have been achieved by rejecting the norms which mainstream has to offer. These boys talked about their problems as originating in the mainstream system, arguing that it was the teachers there that caused them to misbehave. While not wanting to reject this possibility outright, the apparent abrogation of responsibility for their own behaviour is a concern, as is their apparently skewed view of what is 'normal' or acceptable.

The analysis of pupil experience is what would be predicted from a symbolic interactionist perspective. The extent to which the reflected appraisal of others impacts upon an individual's self image is said to depend upon the individual's

commitment to a social group. Those pupils at Hawthornbank who have access to alternative reference groups are able to reject the negative opinions of the staff. In addition these pupils appear to be employing one of the neutralisation techniques (Sykes and Matza 1957) described in chapter 3 to resist internalising the negative appraisal of others; they choose to reject the credibility of those who are critical of them. This strategy is also used by the Burnside pupils who reject the negative appraisal of their mainstream teachers.

As with diversity, separateness applies as much to provision as to pupils. In chapter 1 it was noted that, unlike for other categories of SEN, a large proportion of separate provision for pupils with SEBD is managed by the voluntary or private sector rather than the local authority. This may go some way to explaining the distance, which is evident from the questionnaire data, between many of the schools and mainstream education provision. Only local authority schools reported links under the heading of 'system meetings such as advisory groups', there are very few links with mainstream schools reported overall, little evidence of joint training and no evidence of professionals within the specialist sector being used as resources for mainstream staff dealing with the needs of similar pupils. Despite the experience of delivering alternative curricula which some separate schools have built up over a number of years, mainstream initiatives on curriculum flexibility are being pursued apparently without any attempt to utilise the considerable experience of the specialist provision.

In some responses to the survey the sense of isolation was articulated through comments about feeling excluded from the policy-making community, at the sharp end of decisions over which they had no control. Of course it should be noted that many in the mainstream education sector share this feeling of powerlessness in the face of policy decisions, however, there are differences of degree. While mainstream policy might impact on, for example, the way assessment, or teaching reading, is to be carried out, in the 'special' sector it may have implications for the very future of the provision, at the very least that is the perception of many of the people who work in the sector. For a number of schools in the survey, the social inclusion agenda is held to be responsible for much of the change they are experiencing. One respondent

used the phrase ‘inclusion dogma’, to explain that pupils are being maintained in mainstream regardless of the consequences; others pointed to the ‘inclusion agenda’ as one of the reasons for changes in their pupil population with, in their opinion, pupils only being referred when they were past the point at which any intervention would make a difference. This sense of being at the mercy of the wider political agenda which favours educational inclusion seemed to be shared by the staff at Hawthornbank.

3. Vulnerability

The third theme which seems to resonate when thinking both about the sector and about pupil experience in it is *vulnerability*. It was argued in chapter 3 and shown in chapter 8 that the views which young people hold about themselves are reflections of the views which they perceive others to have of them. Pupils who were able to maintain friendships outside the separate system, appeared to also be able to maintain more positive views of themselves. For those pupils who did not have such friendships, the reflected appraisal of the adults working with them became crucially important. The ‘sense of self’ of young people who are placed in these isolated schools is thus to a large extent dependent on the attitudes and behaviour of staff towards them. In situations where, for whatever reason, adults are unable to hold positive conceptualisations of these pupils, damage to the individual young person’s self-image seems inevitable.

In chapter 3 reasons were given for not taking a Foucauldian perspective to this thesis. One of the arguments made was that such a view, by identifying the agency of individuals previously thought to be powerless, can obscure the reality of their continued powerlessness. It could, for example, be argued that those pupils in Hawthornbank who are able to resist the negative subjectivity imposed on them by the staff, are more powerful than those in their school who accept their allotted identity. However this would miss the important point that both these groups of pupils are powerless in significant ways. The pupils at Hawthornbank who see themselves as not belonging there are still pupils in the school. Regardless of

whether or not they accept the identity they remain in separate provision and have little control over their future educational placement. Indeed the very act of resisting the subjectivity imposed by the school allows them to be seen as resistant to authority and therefore as justifying their placement there.

Those pupils who are fortunate to be placed in schools where there is a strong and positive ethos also seem to be vulnerable. The evidence supports the view that the education offered to these pupils is not on a par with that at mainstream school. Even in schools which try to follow mainstream curriculum and paths to certification, there are weaknesses. I would argue that as a result the options available to these pupils on leaving school are limited. Educational qualifications continue to be 'positional goods' (Munn 2000) within Scottish society, opening doors both to employment and further training; getting an education and certification is one of the routes out of social exclusion. Pupils leaving separate provision may already be at a disadvantage due to their school record, but their position may be further weakened by the lack of appropriate qualifications and breadth of study, making them more vulnerable to social exclusion in adulthood.

Pupils are vulnerable in another, perhaps more tangible sense: many of the young people interviewed talked about being afraid of other pupils. There was talk of having to 'act tough' and pupils were observed doing exactly that through the use of clothing, their physical stance, and language. Being bullied in mainstream school formed a part of the 'back story' told by many of the pupils in both schools. While pupils in Burnside did not talk about bullying continuing, in Hawthornbank it was clear that it was still a feature of daily life for many pupils. Some of them were able to adopt a tough image, but for others there was no attempt at pretence and they appeared withdrawn and scared, they did not express any confidence in the ability of adults to keep them safe. It was clear from the responses to the questionnaire that the Hawthornbank experience is not unique, with violence being a part of daily life in most of these schools.

I would suggest that staff's inability in Hawthornbank to provide a feeling of safety is because it was not only pupils who were afraid. I have argued that circumstances around Hawthornbank at the time of the study gave rise to at least some of the adults there conceptualising the pupils as dangerous and beyond their control. The circumstances which I argued are at least in part responsible for the production of ethos at Hawthornbank are common to other schools within the sector. It seems reasonable to suppose (and indeed my own experience working in a number of schools would support the view) that at least some of the staff in some schools feel vulnerable and intimidated by pupils. Indeed O'Brien, reporting research into teachers' constructions of pedagogy in SEBD settings, found a 'sense of vulnerability of self and the experience of fear' (2005: 175), more intense than in mainstream settings.

In chapter 3 different ways of conceptualising children were discussed and in chapter 1 the continued tension between welfare and punitive policies targeted at this group of young people were noted. It could be argued that this policy climate in which punishment is seen as a rational response to these individuals encourages the view of them as deliberately bad and/or dangerous. This invitation to view these pupils in this way will remain open for as long as policy in this area continues to stand, albeit only in part, in the punishment tradition. Cultural reasons for the persistence of the popularity of this punitive approach have been discussed recently by Parsons (2005). A similar point is made by O'Neill (2005), examining the experience of girls in trouble, who notes that 'In the current political preoccupation with youth offending, young women who run away can all too easily be conceptualised as "troublesome", subject to criminal justice interventions, rather than as vulnerable children "in need"' (O'Neill 2005: 116).

However, it is not only the pupils and staff in such schools that can be thought of as vulnerable, but also the sector as a whole. The future of separate provision for pupils with SEBD is uncertain; that there will always be pupils who acquire the label SEBD seems beyond doubt, but how they are responded to has been subject to changing fashions over the last 150 years and there is no reason to suppose that will change.

Indeed, it could be argued that the 'problem' of pupils with SEBD is enjoying a higher public profile than ever before, and has become something of a political issue.

In chapter 1 the importance attached to 'social inclusion' by New Labour was noted, as was the tendency for schools to be viewed as part of the solution through educational inclusion. At the same time the perceived problem of rising indiscipline in mainstream schools has excited public interest, with the inclusion of pupils with SEBD often cited as part of the problem. This perception is at odds with the statistics which show that contrary to popular opinion, there has been no decrease in the number of pupils with SEBD educated outwith mainstream (Gibson 2005). The fact that educational inclusion for all and good discipline in schools are still viewed by some groups as mutually exclusive is perhaps testament to the emotive nature of debate in this area. Government has the difficult task of balancing pursuit of its social inclusion agenda with being seen to be tough on indiscipline and supportive of teachers; as was shown in chapter one there has been a continued co-existence of both welfare and punishment approaches to disaffected young people.

Increasingly statistics on disruption in schools are being used as criteria for judging the effectiveness of government; consequently there is a flurry of initiatives to target indiscipline (e.g., SEED 2001b). While these initiatives are very welcome, and indeed there are early indications that they may be making a positive difference (Munn, Riddell, Lloyd *et al.* 2005), I would argue that the high profile of indiscipline as a problem, coupled with the continued tension between punishment and welfare approaches, appears to make it susceptible to short-term reactive policy-making rather than longer-term strategic thinking. Given the apparently opposing demands of educational inclusion for all and zero tolerance towards indiscipline, the sector which meets the needs of pupils who are not welcome in mainstream is vulnerable to changes in prevailing opinion. Given the impact which this vulnerability has been shown to have on staff, and the consequent implications for the experience of pupils in this sector, it is clear that longer-term planning is required to provide some stability, and that the confusion caused by mixed messages needs to be addressed. However, whether there is the political will to move away from the more punitive

interventions and responses to disaffection and indiscipline is open to question, with the anxiety that welfare approaches may be perceived as 'soft' by the electorate.

4. Implications for practice and further research

As was argued in chapter 1, the inclusion of pupils with SEBD is often seen as a special case within wider inclusion arguments; many of those who support educational inclusion in general make an exception in the case of this group of pupils. Thus the sector seems set to continue in some form, but its existence will be in the face of the prevailing inclusion ideology. The very existence of such schools could be seen as a physical reminder of the failure of mainstream schools to meet the needs of all pupils. Perhaps this 'embodiment of failure' is another factor in the continuing separation of this sector from the mainstream, and perhaps even the stigmatisation of the sector as a whole.

This study has identified particular aspects of the sector which give cause for concern, however that is not to say that no good work is done in these schools, nor that the existence of a separate sector will necessarily lead to these difficulties. In the following section some of the implications of the diversity, separateness and vulnerability of pupils and schools identified above will be considered and suggested ways forward discussed. In addition to these three themes which, as described above, emerged from data generated by both the survey and case studies; the mapping exercise also identified issues which have implications for policy and further research and these will also be addressed below.

(i) Diversity

Firstly, regarding the diversity of provision, that there is a range of provision is clear, but is this a good thing? I would argue that having a range of type of provision on offer can indeed be a benefit to pupils under correct circumstances. The danger with talking about different 'types' of SEBD provision is that it raises the familiar 'welfare' versus 'punishment' division outlined in chapter one, and the historical divide between Approved schools for offenders and residential schools for the

‘maldjusted’. However, it is not this old line of divide, nor the range of status, management and so on identified in the survey that I consider of key importance, but rather the educational differences which were apparent from the survey returns. These educational differences are first, the attitude of schools on whether they offer a long term alternative to mainstream or a short-term intervention, and second, and not unrelated, the education (particularly in terms of level of difficulty) and certification on offer.

It would seem important that the attitude of an institution towards the curriculum which is on offer, and whether a return to mainstream is a key aim should be as explicit as possible in the hope that this would have some influence on the placement of pupils. I am arguing that in placing pupils with SEBD in specialist provision their educational needs, including the possibility of reintegration, should be paramount. The evidence from study two strongly suggests that even the most disaffected pupils will engage with education when they consider it to be appropriate and challenging. This links with the traditional view of ‘education as therapy’ identified by Wilson and Evans (1980). However the importance attached to education within separate provision is an area confused by conflicting evidence. In chapter 1 it was suggested that in Scotland there has been a tendency to view education as the cure for a wide range of social ills, the survey found that ‘meeting individual educational needs’ was the second most selected aim of schools, and the interviews with pupils demonstrated that they too held education in high regard. However, despite this apparent consensus on the importance of education much of separate provision continues to offer pupils a restricted curriculum, and some pupils are highly critical of the education they receive. In addition, the findings from the survey which showed that reintegration to mainstream was not a main aim for the vast majority of schools gives rise to serious concern when placed against the findings from the interviews which showed that for a significant minority of the pupils reintegration was a strong desire. It would appear that despite the rhetoric the educational needs of pupils in separate provision are not being given as much consideration as they might wish.

It is clear from the survey that there is a wide range of attitudes to reintegration and education among the providers of separate provision. Ideally these differences would be taken into account when placing pupils in order to achieve a 'best fit' of pupil need and school provision. In practice both schools in study two were the only full time alternative provision available in their local authority for pupils of that age labelled as having SEBD, thus the issue of the aims and principles of the school become somewhat irrelevant in placing decisions. The potential therefore of a diverse sector being able to respond to individual needs through a close match between pupil and provision is not realised, at least in these local authority areas. It would appear that little has changed since *Choosing with Care* (HMI 1990) which found pupil placement to be, at least in part, a matter of geographical accident. Given the diversity of pupils in relation to educational characteristics described above it seems very unfortunate that there is not evidence of flexibility in placement allowing the best match of pupil and provision to take place.

This argument for a diversity among schools in the separate sector, does of course come up against wider arguments about the amount of diversity between schools which is viewed as acceptable. In chapter one the trend towards diversification of schools in England and Wales was noted, along with the contrasting approach in Scotland where the movement is towards all schools being organised as New Community Schools. Thus the notion of separate schools being encouraged to develop diversely to meet the needs of different pupil groups may not be well received by the policy community in Scotland, as it carries with it an implicit approval of the notion of diversity within the school system.

The interviews with pupils highlighted the importance of all students receiving an education which is academically challenging, and one which offers certification and reintegration to mainstream schooling whenever possible and appropriate. It seems to me that ideally the choice would be available between a number of schools, each offering excellent staff/pupil relationships but with different educational programs. Of course the ideal is not often the same as the most cost effective and there are resource implications of such a scenario. Perhaps a more achievable outcome would

be to continue to ensure through the inspection process that the educational needs of pupils are being met, with support given to schools to help them reach this aim. In summary, I have argued that the separate provision sector is diverse as is the pupil population, and that the most important dimension of diversity is that regarding educational issues. I am also arguing that such educational diversity is an asset which is currently under exploited and that a better match between provision and pupil needs could be achieved.

(ii) Separateness

The evidence from the survey suggests that separate provision runs a parallel service to mainstream education with few points of contact along the way. This runs counter to the recommendation (Topping 1983, Cooper 2001) that there should be a continuum of provision allowing for pupils to move along as their needs change. This has repercussions for the possibility of reintegration of pupils to mainstream, as a key element of a successful integration was said (in responses to the survey) to be joint planning and negotiation between parties: something which would surely be supported through ongoing close working relationships. Another consequence of this isolation is the possibility that the perceptions of staff as to what is 'normal' in terms of both academic expectations and behaviour may begin to slide. While most of the pupils at Burnside thought the work they were being given was on a par with what they would get at mainstream, the most recent arrival was dismissive, saying it was much easier and there was a lot less of it. Similarly most talked about the behaviour in school being fine, but the behaviour they described as 'fine' would not be tolerated in most mainstream schools. Further research would need to be conducted to look at whether, and to what extent, teacher expectations of pupils changed after spending time away from teaching in mainstream. If, as would be predicted from this study, there is evidence of such 'slippage' then it may be appropriate to suggest limiting the time teachers should spend teaching outwith the mainstream sector, perhaps through the use of sabbaticals or exchanges lasting at least a term.

In the discussion on the separateness of pupils above it was argued that the pupils interviewed fell into three groups depending on how they felt about their placement. Further research is required to investigate whether the pupils in these different groups described above do indeed have the different long-term outcomes I have suggested. In the meantime, the findings of this research suggest that it is in the best interests of pupils in separate provision to be encouraged to maintain links with mainstream peers. It would seem to be important for professionals working with these pupils to facilitate any existing links which pupils have and/or to develop new ones, for example through working with groups of pupils from both sectors.

(iii) Vulnerability

I have suggested that there is a stigma attached to the separate provision sector as a whole. Indeed it would seem unlikely that attitudes towards a separate system would not be influenced by the widespread acceptance of the notion of educational inclusion which, as argued in chapter one, has been a dominant discourse within education policy over the last decade. This might go some way to explaining the failure of the mainstream community to exploit the expertise which exists within the sector both in the area of working with challenging pupils¹, but also in developing alternative curricula. This notion of a stigmatised sector is only tentatively suggested by the data, but it is supported by anecdotal evidence from workers in the sector, and would certainly merit further research. I would suggest that such research could focus on the attitudes of mainstream professionals towards, and their knowledge of, separate provision and the people who work in it.

A further consequence of the stigmatisation of the sector is that separate provision is side-lined in educational debates with the result that it has existed with minimal regulation. As long as there have been schools which are able to accept pupils who have been rejected by mainstream provision, few questions seem to have been asked about what happens in these schools. In chapter one the historical background to the high proportion of provision in this sector which is managed privately was discussed.

¹One Principal of a school for pupils with SEBD was on the DTG (Scottish Executive 2001b), but any crossover such as this appears to be at this level of committee rather than 'on the ground' between teachers.

It may be that this feature of management has sustained the extent to which these schools 'do their own thing' and remain isolated. The absence of a 'critical gaze' runs counter to the trend in the rest of the public sector towards increasing accountability. Although separate provision is subject to inspection from HMIE using the same performance indicators as mainstream schools, I would argue that a wider set of criteria is required. As the survey demonstrated there is little consensus from within the sector as to what these criteria might be, and a general resistance to the notion of evaluating effectiveness. If separate provision is to become more integrated into the education system it must make itself more accountable.

A first step will be to make explicit the purpose of the provision. Of course this will, as the survey demonstrates, vary between schools but the variation will be within limits. Currently there is no information collated (other than in some cases at school level) on, for example, the reintegration of pupils to mainstream, the destination of school leavers, the incidence of offending behaviour of pupils, and longer-term follow-up of school leavers. It appeared from the survey returns that schools were concerned that being held to account would make them more vulnerable, the view that they had no control over outcomes was expressed by a number of respondents. However, if schools were to make their aims more explicit and were held to account for their outcomes they would, I suggest, find themselves in stronger position than they are now.

As with all systems of accountability there are certain caveats, the first is that schools should have input into developing appropriate criteria, and second that schools failing to meet these agreed criteria should be given appropriate help to improve rather than simply be criticised. If these conditions were met then it is possible that the position of separate provision could be improved. A clearer understanding of what the schools do, and equally importantly do not, offer would improve popular understanding of their contribution to the education system as a whole. An evidence base which illustrated success in pursuit of these aims would help develop an understanding of the approaches to working with pupils with SEBD which are most useful. Evidence which pointed to failure to meet aims would give local authorities

an indication of when difficulties were arising, allowing interventions to be made to improve schools. All of these outcomes would help to promote the inclusion of the separate sector as a valued part of the education system, and go some way to removing the negative consequences of its current stigmatisation and separateness.

It was clear from the review of the literature in chapter 2 relating to effective practice in schools for pupils with SEBD that there is a body of knowledge about what makes for good separate provision. Visser (2005) talks about the ‘eternal verities’ of approaches to working with pupils with SEBD and notes the tendency within this field to ‘reinvent the wheel’. What this research suggests is that the problem may lie not so much in knowing ‘what works’ but in establishing the need for the education system as a whole to recognise and support the specialist sector to allow it to do its job. In other words, we already know a lot about ‘what works’ and have done for some considerable time, this study has shown some of the factors which prevent ‘what works’ taking place. In particular this research suggests that the climate of uncertainty over the future of provision, the co-existence of the conflicting welfare and punishment approaches, and the stigmatisation of the sector are all significant. As discussed in chapter one, the tension between punishment and welfare approaches to these young people in Scotland has deep historical roots and recent policy changes have only served to perpetuate this dichotomous approach.

(iv) Policy implications from the map of separate provision

One of the main purposes of the survey was to produce a map of separate provision. This has provided information about the management of the schools, the number and profile of pupils, and issues relating to curriculum and ethos. Some interesting findings emerged which have direct implications for policy and these will now be discussed.

Over a half of the schools responding to this survey are run independently of the local authority. This compares with only around one quarter of such schools in England and Wales (Cole *et al.* 1998). In chapter one the history of this sector in Scotland was described in detail, and it was noted that schools for other categories of

impairment were much more likely to be managed by the local authority. From the survey returns it is apparent that it is the independent and voluntary schools which are experiencing greatest change and uncertainty as they attempt to meet the demands of a changing market. Given the consequences of a climate of uncertainty for the people working in the sector and thus also for the pupils, I suggest that the feasibility of bringing these schools back into the local authority 'stable' should be examined.

It is clear from the level of exclusions and the reported level of violence from many of the schools that separate provision as it currently exists is not able to meet the needs of a small, but according to survey responses – growing, number of pupils whose behaviour is judged to be extremely violent. In 2003 the Scottish Executive announced plans to increase the numbers of secure beds by 30% by 2007²; it may be that many of the pupils currently presenting with extreme violence in separate schools will find their way to these secure placements. Such a move would mark a strong swing towards punitive responses to young people in difficulty, with all the attendant consequences of that approach. I would argue that there is a need for policy which stands more in the welfare tradition to be developed to address the needs of this very vulnerable, but difficult to manage group of young people.

The number of pupils from non-white ethnic backgrounds recorded in the survey was 7 out of a total population of 805. Although the percentage of pupils described as Black Caribbean (0.12%) is higher than the national school population of pupils in this ethnic group (0.01%) the 0.12% actually represents only 1 pupil; these small numbers make it difficult to draw conclusions. However, it is interesting that the percentage of pupils described as white is almost 10% higher than in the school population (99.13% compared with 89.53%), suggesting that pupils from a white ethnic background are over-represented. Recent statistics on pupils excluded from school show an over-representation of Gypsy Travellers, and it may be that this previously hidden (statistically speaking) ethnic group may equally be over

² <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2003/03/3387> (accessed 24/10/05)

represented in separate provision. Further research would be required to ascertain if this is indeed the case; if so then clearly there is work to be done in developing policy that assists mainstream schools to meet the needs of these pupils.

Another group of pupils reported in the survey who give concern are girls, who once in separate provision are much more likely to be in a residential placement than boys. Possible explanations for this have been discussed in chapter 5. I suggest that further research is required to examine whether this is indeed a consequence of different judgements being made about inappropriate and risky behaviour in boys and girls; or whether it is more a function of the availability of provision for girls in a local area. Whatever the cause there is a need for it to be challenged. If provision is found to be the issue then there will be a need make adequate resources available locally so that young women do not end up removed from their home community by default. If however values and attitudes are found to play an important part in the pathways of girls in separate provision then there are implications for the continuing professional development, as well as initial training, of workers in the sector.

Finally, as noted in chapter 1, recent legislation has been enacted in Scotland with the intention of providing better support to young people with additional support needs. At this early stage the impact which this legislation will have on the provision for pupils with SEBD can only be guessed at. However there are clues in the existing provision for these pupils. First, the survey found that only 9% of the pupils (and indeed only 3% of the girls) had a record of need, compared with around 80% of the total special school population. This suggests, and is confirmed by HMIE (2003b), that schools for pupils with SEBD are generally very poor at implementing legislation relating to their pupils. Secondly, the *Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000* introduced a 'presumption of mainstreaming' but it has been pupils with SEBD who have been made the exceptions to this on the grounds that their inclusion can be detrimental to the education of others. The new legislation does not remove the presumption, nor the permitted exceptions to it. Finally, it has been suggested that the legislation may lead to a lack of clarity (Hayward, MacBride, Smith and Spencer 2005), combining as it does the need to combat the causes of educational difficulties

(such as inappropriate curriculum), with a call to focus on the needs of the individual learner. The concern is that the latter interpretation may keep the door open to within child deficit perspectives. In relation to pupils with SEBD who present immediate and direct challenges to teachers, it may be that the tendency will be to continue to lean towards a deficit understanding of the pupils' behaviour. Hayward *et al.* (2005) conclude with the observation that legislation alone cannot change values and attitudes. Given the trend towards increasing punitive measures towards young people (in other words the persistence of the attitude which construes them as deliberately misbehaving) it seems unlikely that the new legislation will have much impact on the experience of these pupils.

Before concluding, it is important to note that the findings of this thesis have implications beyond separate provision. This is particularly the case in the area of curriculum flexibility and certification. In chapter one the value placed on traditional academic subjects in Scotland was noted, along with recent government initiatives to promote the use of flexibility in the curriculum to engage disaffected learners. The view of the pupils in study 2 was that while they were enthusiastic about elements of the alternative curriculum where it was structured and progressive (rather than simply doing an activity), they did not want to stop doing what they saw as the core curriculum, in other words they appear to have adopted the cultural valuing of a narrow band of subjects. It was important to them to be able to say that they were *doing the same subjects, and getting the same certificates*, as everyone else. Although this research represents only the views of a small number of pupils in a 'special setting', as noted above, it does fit with findings in other studies about the importance of education to interrupted learners. Therefore the findings from this study should at least be borne in mind when plans to extend curriculum flexibility are being considered.

Finally, I would suggest that the accounts given by pupils in study 2 of their mainstream experiences and what could have made things better should be noted. Of course these pupils will have been presenting their own perspective on what happened, however I suggest it is significant that almost all pupils in both schools

talked about relationships with teachers, rather than the curriculum or other pupils, as being the main area in which they had difficulty. This would suggest that there may be benefit to be had from including more training on working with troubled children as part of initial teacher education programmes. Indeed, it was suggested in chapter 3, that the explanation for the identification of some pupils as 'deviant' which is based on the work of Durkheim, would hold that these pupils are 'cultural critics' of mainstream schooling. If the pupils who are in separate provision have a message for mainstream educators and policy-makers it is almost unanimously that teachers make the difference.

Conclusion

This study set out to map out separate provision for pupils with SEBD in Scotland and to investigate the experience of pupils in such provision. In so doing it has provided new information about this sector. The questionnaire gave, for the first time, a picture of the sector in terms of who is running it, their sense of purpose, the curriculum on offer, the background of pupils, links with mainstream schools, and attitudes towards evaluating effectiveness. Some findings were predictable, such as the social background and gender mix of pupils, but others were more surprising, such as the high level of exclusion and low number of schools which viewed reintegration as a key purpose.

The interviews with pupils were carried out to address specific questions relating to curriculum, educational experience, ethos and stigmatisation. It became clear that whether a pupil experiences re-signification or stigmatisation is not a straightforward matter, but depends on staff attitudes and peer relationships. The ethos of schools emerged as of fundamental importance, and as something which appears to exist independently of the type of curriculum on offer. Perhaps most significantly the importance of the curriculum and of receiving a 'mainstream' education, to even the most disaffected pupils, emerged.

These then were the answers to the research questions, but much more emerged from the two studies. It became clear that much of separate provision in Scotland today is an unhappy place for pupils and staff alike. I have argued that much of this unhappiness is attributable to the isolation of the sector and to its association with failure. I have also argued that regardless of idealised notions of full inclusion, separate provision will continue to exist and that therefore steps should be taken to include it as a part of the wider education system.

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Appendix A Legislative framework

A summary of Scottish legislation affecting pupils with SEBD.

Table 1 Summary of relevant legislation

Act/Bill	Date	Main points relevant to pupils with SEBD
Education (Scotland) Act	1969	Introduction of multi-disciplinary assessment, including by child psychologists.
Education (Scotland) Act	1981	'Special Educational Needs' is the new terminology, and the 'Record of Needs' is introduced.
Children's (Scotland) Act	1995	Introduction of legislation relating to parental and children's rights.
Standards in Scottish Schools Act	2000	Presumption of mainstreaming introduced.
Curriculum Flexibility	2003	Gives guidance on good practice relating to flexibility and lifting of age/stage restrictions.
Education (additional Support for Learning) Act	2004	Replaces SEN with 'Additional Support Needs'; Record of Needs replaced with individualised Co-ordinate Support Plan.
Anti-Social Behaviour (Scotland) Act	2004	Introduces Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, Parental Orders, Community Reparation Orders and 'tagging' for 12-16 years olds.

Appendix B: Letter to schools requesting brochure

Dear [REDACTED]

I am a PhD student at Edinburgh University studying the separate educational provision in Scotland for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. As a first-step in my research I hope to construct a questionnaire which will be used to map provision in this area.

I am currently looking for some preliminary information to help me construct the questionnaire and make it as relevant as possible. Specifically I would like to examine brochures to get a sense of the ways in which schools describe themselves.

If your school (unit/centre) has a brochure, or information in another form, I would be very grateful for a copy. Any information I receive will be used only for the purpose of constructing the questionnaire and will be used anonymously.

It would be extremely helpful to have a brochure before the end of March.

I enclose a pre-paid envelope for your convenience

Best Wishes

Gale Macleod

Appendix C: Questionnaire

Simon Laurie House
University of Edinburgh
Holyrood Road
Edinburgh
EH8 8AQ



Research on provision for children with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

Dear [redacted],

I am a PhD student at Edinburgh University studying the separate educational provision in Scotland for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

A major objective of this study is to build up a picture of the available provision both in terms of the 'policies and procedures' of the schools or units and a profile of the children catered for.

I would be very grateful if you could find the time to respond to the enclosed questionnaire. Pilot study responses indicate that this will take between 20 minutes and an hour. I understand that your time will be limited and have consequently endeavoured to restrict the questionnaire to item which I consider essential. In addition, wherever possible I have asked for information to be given in the same format as for the Special Schools' Census.

You were kind enough to send me a copy of your school's brochure to assist the construction of this questionnaire and I hope you will be able to participate in this study once again.

Any information I receive will be used anonymously, in addition care will be taken to ensure that schools are not identifiable in any way. A summary of all responses will be sent to every school that takes part in this survey.

It would be extremely helpful to have your response by **Friday 11th October**. If you have any questions or would like to discuss issues raised in the questionnaire, I can be contacted on 0131-651-6384 or Gale_McLeod@education.ed.ac.uk

A second part of my thesis will be based on a study of a small group of children who are educated separately this will focus on their experience of being educated outwith the mainstream.

It is my opinion that children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and the services which meet their needs are often overlooked in general studies of Special Education. This questionnaire is an attempt to redress that balance and I hope you will be able to assist.

I enclose a pre-paid envelope for your convenience

Best Wishes

Gale Macleod

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Please make any corrections to the information entered for questions 1, 2 and 3

Q1.

Name of School or Unit

Q2.

Headteacher or Principal

Q3.

Address

Q4.

Please indicate the status of your school.

Voluntary

☐

Private

☐

Local authority provision

☐

Other (please specify)

☐ _____

Q5.

(a) How long has the school been open? _____ years

(b) If the nature of the provision offered by your school has changed significantly in the last 20 years (e.g status, remit, age or gender of children, becoming residential/day) please give details.

Q6.

Name of person(s) completing the questionnaire _____

Position(s) _____

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Q7.

Whilst I appreciate that all of the following may be important aims for your school, I would like you to indicate which three of the aims are the **most** important for your school. (use 1 for most important, 2 for next most important and 3 for third most important)

To meet individual educational needs	
To prepare children for adult life and work	
To reintegrate children to mainstream	
To promote self-esteem	
To promote positive change in families	
To provide a supportive environment	
To assess/identify individual needs	
To help children reach their full potential	
To change children's behaviour	

Q8.

(a) *Please tick the box which best reflects your response to the following statement.*

For the majority of our pupils we provide interventions of less than 2 years with the aim of returning pupils to mainstream education

- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

(b) *Please tick the box which best reflects your response to the following statement.*

For the majority of our pupils we provide a long-term (2 years or more) alternative to mainstream education.

- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Q9.

Please give details of any specialist staff paid for by your school in the following areas of work.

<i>Area of work</i>	<i>Job Title</i>	<i>Number of FTE staff</i>
Psychologists		
Therapists		
Other specialist services		

ABOUT THE PUPILS

Please answer questions 10 to 16 for pupils on the school roll on the 10st September 2002.

Q10.

(a) How many full-time equivalent places does your school have?

(b) How many pupil places does this represent?

Q11.

Please give the numbers of boys and girls attending your school predominantly because of:

(i) **behavioural difficulties** (*e.g. aggression, destructiveness, truancy, classroom disruption in previous schools*)

(ii) **emotional difficulties** (*e.g. anxiety, depression, isolation, phobias*)

(iii) **social difficulties** (*e.g. poor peer relationships, poor social skills*)

(iv) **two or three of the above** (*none predominant*)

(v) **other** (*please specify in box below*)

BOYS	GIRLS

QUESTIONS 12 AND 13 ASK FOR SIMILAR INFORMATION TO THAT WHICH IS COLLECTED IN SECTION 5 (PUPIL/STUDENT INFORMATION) OF THE SCHOOL CENSUS.

Q12

(a)Please indicate the number of pupils in each category.

<i>STAGE</i>	<i>Girls Day</i>	<i>Girls Residential</i>	<i>Boys Day</i>	<i>Boys Residential</i>
P1-3				
P4-7				
S1-2				
S3-4				
S5-6				

(b) Please indicate the number of children who have the following difficulty in learning (in addition to those difficulties mentioned in Q11). Only one of the following, the main difficulty to be recorded for each child. *Numbers refer to codes from the school census.*

	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
7 Specific Learning Difficulty (including Dyslexia)		
9 Moderate Learning difficulties		
10 Severe learning difficulties		
12 Autistic spectrum disorder		

(c) Please indicate the number of children *who have been diagnosed* as having ADHD or ADD (this may be in addition to other difficulties).

<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>

(d) Please indicate the number of children who have a Record of Need.

	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
Day Pupils		
Residential pupils		

Q13.

To enable comparison with the wider population, please indicate the number of children from each ethnic group. *Numbers refer to codes from the school census.*

1 White	
2 Chinese	
3 Indian	
4 Pakistani	
5 Bangladeshi	
6 Black Caribbean	
7 Black African	
8 Black Other	
9 Mixed	
98 Any other	
99 Not known or divulged	

Q14.

Please estimate the number of children for whom no adult in the home is in full-time employment.

Q15.

Please indicate how many of your pupils have each of the following as their **main** place of residence. *Please take 'parent' to refer to biological, adoptive or step- relationships.*

Living with both parents	
Living with a single parent	
Living with one parent and their partner	
Living with carers (<i>including extended family</i>)	
Living in local authority accommodation	
Other	
Not Known	
At school on 52 week placement	

Q16.

Please indicate the number of your pupils who remain on the roll of a mainstream school.

Q17.

Please indicate the number of the pupils who spent the following portions of *the most recent school week* in a mainstream school or college.

<i>Portion of the week</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
None	
Less than one day	
One day	
Two or three days	
More than three days	

Question 18 asks about the academic year 2000 – 2001.

Q18.

(a) In total, how many pupils left your school at age 16 or over in the academic year '00 – '01

(b) How many pupils who left at 16 years or over in the academic year '00 – '01 entered further education?

(c) How many pupils who left at 16years or over in the academic year '00-'01 entered full-time employment?

Please answer questions 19 and 20 for the most recent whole school week

Q19.

(a) What was the total number of half days lost due to temporary exclusions in your school in the most recent whole school week?

(b) How many children were temporarily excluded in this week?

(c) How many incidences of exclusion/removal from the register were there in your school in this week?

Q20.

(a) What was the total number of half days of absence from your school in the most recent whole school week? (*include authorised and unauthorised absences and absence due to exclusion*)

(b) How many children were absent in this week?

(c) What was the total number of possible half day attendances at your school in this week?

Q21.

How much say does the school's admissions procedure have in deciding which pupils are admitted to your school?

Very substantial ☐

Substantial ☐

Little ☐

Almost none ☐

Q22.

Name any factors which would prompt the school to :

(a) oppose the admission of potential pupils

(i) pupil characteristics

(ii) pupil behaviour

(iii) other factors

(b) permanently exclude a pupil

(i) pupil characteristics

(ii) pupil behaviour

(iii) other factors

Q23.

(a) Has the nature of the pupil intake of your school changed in the last five years?

YES *please continue with Q23 (b) and (c)* NO *please go to question 24*

(b) If 'Yes', please indicate in what ways

(c) Please say what you think the reasons are for this change

Q24.

(a) How many pupils have left your school to enter full-time mainstream education (*secondary or primary*) in the last three years?

(b) How many of these transfers do you believe have been:

Successful	
Quite successful	
Not very successful	
A failure	
Too soon to judge	
Unable to judge	

(c) How would you describe a successful integration into mainstream?

Q25.

Please give details of any links that your school has with mainstream schools

(i) **formal** *(by which I mean clearly defined arrangements that follow set procedures and tend to be agreed between senior staff/ management groups)*

(ii) **informal** *(by which I mean casual and flexible arrangements that tend to be agreed on an ad hoc basis)*

ABOUT THE CURRICULUM

Q26.

What is the usual teaching group size?

Q27.

(a) Does your school make any provision for an ‘Alternative Curriculum’?

Yes *please continue with Q27 (b)*

No *please go to Q28*

(b) What subjects do you offer as part of an ‘Alternative Curriculum’?

(i) primary

(ii) secondary

(c) What do you think the benefits are of adopting an ‘Alternative Curriculum’ in working with the children in your school?

Q28.

Please tick the box which best reflects your response to the following statement

(a) The standard core curriculum is appropriate for the majority of the pupils in this school

- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

(b) Which subjects, or activities, that you offer (*either as core subjects or as part of an alternative curriculum*) do you find most useful in engaging the interest of children with SEBD?

(c) Please indicate any structured or certified courses you have found useful as part of an Alternative Curriculum

ABOUT THE APPROACHES USED IN YOUR SCHOOL

Q29.

Which of these following statements best describes the principles on which your school is based. (*please tick only one*)

They emerge largely from the therapeutic tradition
(including e.g. psychodynamic and milieu therapy approaches) ☐

They emerge largely from the behaviourist tradition ☐

They emerge from both the therapeutic and
behaviourist traditions ☐

They emerge from neither the therapeutic nor
behaviourist traditions ☐

Q30.

(a) Tick the ‘yes’ box for each strategy that your school uses, and
(b) For those (and only those) that your school has, please rate their usefulness in
managing pupil behaviour in your school.

	(a)	(b)			
	Yes	Not Useful	Of Some Use	Fairly Useful	Very Useful
A written behaviour management policy					
Behaviour management system based on points or tokens					
A ‘levels’ system of behaviour management					
Incentives agreed and applied by all staff					
Sanctions/deterrents agreed and applied by all staff					
Extra staff to look after pupils wandering/ejected from class					
Community meetings where pupils express their views					
A complaints procedure clearly understood by pupils					
A school uniform					
A ‘keyworker’ system					
Close liaison with parents/carers					
Structured activity time					
A written physical restraint policy					

ABOUT EVALUATING EFFECTIVENESS

Q31.

- (a) Please indicate with a tick which assessments are used in your school.
- (b) For those (and only those) that you use, please indicate how valid you think it is to use pupil success as a performance indicator for your school.

	(a)	(b)			
	<i>Used in this school</i>	<i>Not valid</i>	<i>Of Some Validity</i>	<i>Valid</i>	<i>Very Valid</i>
5-14 National Tests					
Standard Grades					
Access 1 Awards					
Access 2					
Access 3					
Intermediate 1 units/courses					
Intermediate 2 units/courses					
Higher					
Advanced higher					
“old” Higher					
Core Skills					
Other (please specify)					

Q32.

Please tick the box which best reflects your response to the following statements

(a) Attainment evaluated against Target Setting¹ is a valid performance indicator for this school.

- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

¹ (*any of ‘80% of pupils reaching 80% of targets’, ‘80% of targets in total being reached’ or ‘80% of pupils reaching all their targets’*)

(b) Reintegration to mainstream education is a valid performance indicator for this school.

- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

(c) The number of pupils entering further education is a valid performance indicator for this school.

- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

(d) The number of pupils entering full-time employment is a valid performance indicator for this school.

- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

(e) The rate of exclusions is a valid performance indicator for this school.

- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

(f) The attendance rate is a valid performance indicator for this school.

- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Q33.

Are there other factors that you consider would be valid performance indicators for your school?

Q34.

Despite the length of this questionnaire you may feel that you have not had the opportunity to describe positive and distinct features of your work which help to make life for the pupils at your school ‘special’ and different from the kind of education and care they would be likely to receive in mainstream school. Please include any additional information with your completed questionnaire.

Q35. I would/would not be willing to be contacted to discuss issues raised in this questionnaire.

Thankyou

Appendix D: Reminder Letter to schools



I recently sent you a questionnaire on separate educational provision for children with social, emotional and behavioural problems in Scotland.

An important part of my research is giving such provision a 'voice' in the ongoing inclusion debate. For this reason it is essential that I am able to make claims of reliability and validity for my findings, and this in turn requires a good response rate.

Having worked in a number of 'SEBD' schools I am very aware of how valuable you time is, but I would be very grateful if you could spare the time to complete the questionnaire.

I can send you a replacement copy if the original has gone astray, alternatively I would be happy to complete the questionnaire by phone if that would be more convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Gale Macleod

Appendix E: Interview Guide

1. What are the good bits about CM/GEC?

Building/resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teachers/adults	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rules	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schoolwork	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Are there things you don't like about CM/GEC?
[What would you change if you could?]

Building/resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teachers/adults	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rules	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schoolwork	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Educational Experience

Class size	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching/learning style	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriateness of work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subjects – different/	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subjects – choice?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homework	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exams/certificates	<input type="checkbox"/>
After school ambitions?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>
routines	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other?	<input type="checkbox"/>

4 Relationships with adults

Compared with mainstream do teachers treat you differently?

Do you treat them differently? ☐

Fairness	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strictness	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rules	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sanctions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fun/laugh	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relaxed/informal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.Reputation of school

Did you know about CM before you came here? What did you think? ☐

How would you describe the school? ☐

Do you mind people knowing you come to this school? ☐

What do others think of CM?

Teachers – here	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mainstream	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family: parents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Siblings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other YP	<input type="checkbox"/>
College/future employer?	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Summary/History

Can you tell me a bit about how you came here...

Previous school	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problems?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Who made decision? ☐

what one thing could have made a difference? ☐

Alias? ☐

Appendix F : Categories associated with each topic area, by school.

In each table, categories which emerged which were unique to that school are in **bold** type.

1. STIGMA/ RESIGNIFICATION

code	School 1	School 2
1,1	Own behaviour improved?	Own behaviour improved?
1,2	Same as m/stream?	Same as m/stream?
1,3	Label?	Label?
1,4	Tells other people?	Tells other people?
1,5	Own view	Own view
1,6	Future	Future
1,7		
1,8 [<i>Views of others</i>]	Ts at spec school	Ts at spec school
1,9	Ts at m/stream	Ts at m/stream
1,10	Family	Family
1,11	Other young people	Other young people
1,12	Rejects views of others	
1,13 [<i>Knowledge of school</i>]	Family?	
1,14	Prior knowledge	Prior knowledge
1,15	General knowledge	
1,16		Medicalisation
1,17	Peers in school	Peers in school
1,18	Peers outside	Peers outside
1,19	Own behaviour at m/stream	Own behaviour at m/stream
1,20		Labelling self as unable to cope

2A –EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

code	School 1	School 2
2A,1	Class size	Level of difficulty
2A,2	Level of difficulty	Class size
2A,3	Resources	Resources
2A,4	Individual help / work	Individual help / work
2A,5	Better work	Comp with m/str?
2A,6	Free time	Certificates + tests
2A,7	motivation	Pedagogy
2A,8	Certificates + courses	Free time
2A,9	Same as m/stream	Move from class to class
2A,10	Lesson length	
2A,11	Own pace	
2A,12	Post 16 aspiration	
2A,13	Routines	
2A,14	School size	School size
2A,20	purpose	Importance of school

2B CURRICULUM

code	School 1	School 2
2B,1	Same subjects but different	Miss subjects
2B,2	Comp with m/stream	Same subjects but different
2B,3	Miss subjects	Options
2B,4	Choice	Other
2B,5	Atl curr = extra	Trips out
2B,6	Alt curr – good	Teachers doubling up
2B,7	Alt curr – reward	Comp with m/stream
2B,8	Alt curr – one of best bits	
2B,9	Alt curr – better than m/stream	

3 ETHOS

code	School 1	School 2
3,1 <i>[Relationships]</i>	Ts more friendly/relaxed	Teachers - comments
3,2	Ts respect young people?	Respect Ts?
3,3	other +ve comments	Ts' attitude
3,4	Ts want to help young people	Ts respect young people?
3,5	Ts' attitude	Ideal T
3,6	Other	Pride in school?
3,7 <i>[Behaviour management]</i>	Demerits	
3,8	Strictness?	Ts shout
3,9	Fairness?	Strictness?
3,10	Ts are in control	Fairness?
3,11	Expectations	Sent home
3,12	Rules	Expectations?
3,13	Own behaviour	Behaviour of others
3,14	Behaviour of others	Rules
3,15	Disrupt work?	Own behaviour
3,16	Bullying cf m/stream	Medication
3,17	Peer relationships	Peer relationships
3,18	Fear (lack of)	Bullying
3,19	Ts shout less	Points
3,20	Reflect treatment by Ts	Reflect treatment by teachers?

4. MISCELLANEOUS

code	School 1	School 2
4,1	Was worried would lose contact with pals but hasn't	Wants to be?
4,2	Ts make the difference	
4,3	Mixed placement problems	
4,4	Wants to be ?	

Appendix G: Example of blank topic grid – Educational Experience

BURNSIDE

RQ 2A Educational experience	CATEGORY	BARRY	RS5000	CAIM	ROBERT	SCOTT	ARTETA	STEVE
1	Class size							
2	Level of difficulty							
3	resources							
4	Individual help / work							
5	Better work							
6	Free time							
7	motivation							
8	Certificates + courses							
9	Same as m/str							
10	Lesson length							
11	Own pace							
12	Post 16 aspiration							
13	Routines							
14	School size							
15								
16								
17								
18								
19								
20	purpose							

HAWTHORNBANK

RQ Educational experience	CATEGORY	Emma	Hayley	Jamie	Jacky	Marie	Alex	Larsson
1	Level of difficulty							
2	Class size							
3	Resources							
4	Individual help / work							
5	Comp with m/str							
6	Certificates + tests							
7	Pedagogy							
8	Free time							
9	Move from class to							
10								
11								
12								
13								
14	School size							
15								
16								
17								
18								
19								
20	Importance of school							

Appendix H: – Covering letter to pupil and example of summary



Simon Laurie House
Moray House School of Education
University of Edinburgh
Holyrood Road
Edinburgh
EH8 8AQ



Dear 

I am writing to thank you for agreeing to be interviewed by me earlier this year about your experiences of school. I am enclosing a summary of the things we talked about. If I have made any mistakes, misunderstood what you wanted to say, or if there is anything you want to add please let me know. I am sending an envelope with a stamp and my address so you can get in touch with me if you need to. Thanks again for your help in this research project.

Best wishes

Gale Macleod

Gale asked [REDACTED] to say a bit about the school.

[REDACTED] likes it here. He likes that you get to do things like go out on trips if your behaviour is good. Having that to look forward to helps him manage his behaviour.

Gale asked [REDACTED] about the school rules.

[REDACTED] said they are better here than in mainstream because you get given chances so you get the chance to sort things out.

[REDACTED] said he thinks the teachers here want to help the pupils manage and that the teachers in mainstream don't.

Gale asked [REDACTED] about the other young people.

[REDACTED] said there isn't bullying here but there was in his old school. Some other kids say things about the school but they don't really know what it's like. [REDACTED] said they all get on, they play football together and that helps them get on, they have to work together as a group.

Gale asked [REDACTED] about schoolwork.

[REDACTED] said he was falling behind at mainstream, but the work here is better, it is more suited to the pupils here. Also, if you work hard here you get free time in class and that didn't happen in mainstream. Having free time to work towards help you concentrate and get on with your work.

Gale asked [REDACTED] what he plans to do when he leaves school.

Scott wants to be a mechanic; he's not sure what he'll need to do to train as a mechanic but he knows that Mrs [REDACTED] will keep him right. [REDACTED] does Access courses here in maths and language and cookery. Gale asked [REDACTED] if the subjects here are

different. [REDACTED] says no, the only difference is that you get to do all the outdoor stuff as a reward if you manage your behaviour. There are some subjects he can't do here like Science and music but that doesn't bother him at all.

Gale asked [REDACTED] about the teachers here.

[REDACTED] says they have more time for you and will listen to you about work or anything else. The small classes mean there is more time. The teachers are different too, they give you a chance, they respect the pupils and so they get respect back. The teachers here are fairer than the teachers at mainstream. The teachers here don't shout at you, they stay calm and help you sort things out. [REDACTED] said Mr [REDACTED] tries to help him with both behaviour and work. Break times are good here too because you get to go to the units and have toast and tea. [REDACTED] likes the small size of the school because you can get to know everybody.

Gale asked [REDACTED] what the teachers here would say they are here for.

[REDACTED] said the teachers are here to help them learn, and get qualifications. It is important to them that the pupils here do well. The teachers here care about what happens to the pupils. But in mainstream the teachers just want to get rid of you.

Gale asked [REDACTED] what made the most difference, the teachers or the schoolwork. [REDACTED] said it is the teachers.